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Kalyana-Kalpataru

Sri Krishna-Lila Number—I

January 1942

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The *Bhagavadgītā* or "Song Celestial" has got a unique position among the religious books of the world and is held in high esteem not only by Hindus in India, but also by a large number of men and women in other countries. It is the cream of the Hindu scriptures, and as such it governs the thought-structure of all schools of religious thought in India. The teachings of the *Gītā* have not merely a theoretical or academic interest; they are intensely practical so far as building up of a spiritual life is concerned. They have again a universal application. There is no doubt that the *Gītā* can contribute a large share to the solution of the pressing problems of India and of humanity. It is a book worthy of being read, re-read and assimilated by the thinking people all over the world. Every individual should endeavour to derive strength and help from this sacred book.

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The Kalyana-Kalpataru ✸



The Prince of Vraja

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्म पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANAM KALDRASTAM

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

Vol. IX]

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[No. 1

कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय देवकीनन्दनाय च ।
नन्दगोपकुमाराय गोविन्दाय नमो नमः ॥

(*Bhāgavata I. viii. 21*)

I bow, again and again, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva,
the delighter of Devakī, the darling of Nandagopa, the
protector of cows.

— — —

Salutations to the Lord

"We bow to that self-effulgent Lord who is extolled even by great gods like Brahmā, Varuṇa (the god of water), Indra (the god of rain), Rudra (the god of destruction), and the Maruts (the wind-gods) through celestial hymns; whose glories are sung by those proficient in chanting the Sāmaveda through the Vedas along with the six Angas (branches of knowledge auxiliary to the Vedas), Pada (division of the Vedic text into separate words), Krama and Jatā (particular methods of reciting the Vedas) and the Upaniṣads; who is perceived by the Yogis by means of their mind made steady through meditation and fixed on the Lord; and whose reality is not known even to gods and Asuras."

(*Śrimad Bhāgavata* XII. xiii. 1)

"Śrimad Bhāgavata is a peerless lamp of wisdom. It was revealed first of all by the Lord Himself to Brahmā, the Creator. Again, it was He who as Brahmā taught it to the divine sage Nārada and as Nārada delivered it to Bhagavān Vedavyāsa. Nay, even as Vyāsa it was He who taught it to Śukadeva, the Master of Yoga, and as Śukadeva He was gracious enough to impart it to the royal sage Parīkṣit. He is absolutely pure and free from the stain of Māyā. He is immortal and untouched by sorrow. We contemplate Him, the Supreme Reality."

(*Ibid.* XII. xiii. 19)

"Obeisance to Bhagavān Vāsudeva, the All-witness, who graciously taught *Śrimad Bhāgavata* to Brahmā, who was aspiring for liberation."

(*Ibid.* XII. xiii. 20)

"I bow to Śri Hari, the Supreme Lord, the chanting of whose sacred names destroys all sins, and salutations to whom allay all suffering and sorrow once for all."

(*Ibid.* XII. xiii. 23)

"Salutations to Bhagavān Vedavyāsa, possessing immense spiritual power, the nectar of wisdom flowing from whose lotus-like lips is quaffed by holy men."

(*Ibid.* II. ix. 24)

The Date of Srimad Bhagavata

About the date and authorship of *Srimad Bhāgavata* there has been many a conjecture and speculation. This has been pioneered mostly by the Western scholars or their blind disciples in the East, who seem to lay more emphasis and place greater reliance on external proofs than on the internal evidences. Some of these scholars have gone to the length of proving that the *Bhāgavata* is a work of the 13th century and was composed by Bopadeva. Some attempt to prove it to be still more modern, and a few scholars of extraordinary imagination have pronounced that a considerable portion of the *Bhāgavata*, e.g., the Rāsalīlā and other such episodes are additions of the 16th century. All these and many more of such statements are mere conjectures and nothing more. *Srimad Bhāgavata* is the life-work of Bhagavān Vedavyāsa and was composed no less than five thousand years ago, as will be shewn in the following paragraphs.

Bopadeva was born in the 13th century A.D. The Yādava king of Devagiri, Raja Mahādeva, ruled from 1260 to 1271 A.D. and was succeeded by Rāmachandra, who reigned from 1271-1309 A.D. The prime minister to both these Yādava kings was Hemādri and it was mostly with a view to pleasing Hemādri that Bopadeva had written a number of books on various subjects, twenty-six of which are still extant. Out of these twenty-six, ten are on Grammar, nine on Medicine, one on Tithis or lunar days, three on literature and three more on the philosophy of the *Bhāgavata*. 'Paramahaṁsa-priya', 'Harililamṛta' and 'Muktaphala' are the three books on the philosophy of the

Bhāgavata—out of which 'Harililamṛta' and 'Muktaphala' have been published. In the commentary on 'Muktāphala', which was written by no other person than Hemādri himself, there occurs a Śloka which refers to the works of Bopadeva and it is as follows:—

यस्य व्याकरणे ब्रह्मघटनाः स्तीताः प्रबन्धा दश
प्रख्याता नव वैचकेऽपि तिथिनिर्धारार्थमेकोऽद्भुतः ।
साहित्ये त्रय एव भागवततत्त्वोत्तौ त्रयस्तस्य च
भूगीवाणशिरोमणेरिह गुणाः के के न लोकेतराः ॥

'Bhāgavatānukramaṇikā' is another name of 'Harililamṛta'. If Bopadeva would have been the author of the *Bhāgavata*, Hemādri must have in his introduction referred to this fact. The fact is that just as Śridhara Swāmī has given the substance of each chapter in one single Śloka at the beginning of his commentary on each chapter of *Srimad Bhāgavata*, and just as he has given the substance of the whole of *Srimad Bhāgavata* in his book entitled 'Bhāgavata-Mañjari', in the same manner Bopadeva has given the substance of the whole of the *Bhāgavata* in his work named 'Harililamṛta'. People saw a few Ślokas of this work at random and came thereby to conclude that Bopadeva is the very author of the *Bhāgavata*. They neither took the trouble of going through the whole book or its commentary 'Kaivalya-Dipikā'.

Hemādri in his 'Chaturvarga-Chintamaṇi' and the 'Dāna-Khaṇḍa' refers to the *Bhāgavata* here and there. Had the *Bhāgavata* been a work by Bopadeva, Hemādri would have never referred to it while deciding religious problems.

This much about Bopadeva. There are other points, too, which prove the antiquity of the *Bhāgavata*. We give some of them below.

1. Swāmī Madhvāchārya, the renowned exponent of Dwaita Philosophy, was born in 1199 A.D., i.e., the beginning of the 13th century; while Bopadeva was born towards the close of the 13th century. Madhvāchārya has written a commentary on *Śrimad Bhāgavata* entitled 'Bhāgavata-Tatparyā-Nirṇaya'. How could Madhvāchārya write this commentary, had not the *Bhāgavata* been in existence before him and held in great esteem in his time. Not only that. He refers to previous commentaries, too, on *Śrimad Bhāgavata*, such as those of Śrī Hanumān, Śankarāchārya and Chitsukhāchārya. In his commentary on the *Gītā*, Śrī Madhvāchārya gives a citation from *Nārāyaṇaśatakākṣara-Kalpa*, which declares *Śrimad Bhāgavata* to be the fifth Veda.

2. Śrī Rāmānujāchārya, the chief exponent of the Viśiṣṭādwaita philosophy and the Śrī-Sampradāya, was born in 1017 A.D., long before Śrī Madhvāchārya. In his "Vedāntasāra-Tattva" he quotes profusely from *Śrimad Bhāgavata*. In his 'Vedārtha-Sangraha' he mentions *Śrimad Bhāgavata* as one of the Sattvic Purāṇas, and also says that it contains eighteen thousand Ślokas. He also quotes from Vedastuti (Chapter 87 of the tenth Skandha) and Skandha XI of *Śrimad Bhāgavata*.

3. Hemādri, the well-known contemporary of Bopadeva refers to Śrī Śridhara Swāmī as amongst the commentators of the *Bhāgavata*. Śrī Śridhara Swāmī in his commentary on the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* refers to Chitsukhāchārya. Thus it is clear that Śridhara preceded Bopadeva, while Chitsukhāchārya flourished even before Śridhara

Swāmī. In the Śāṅkara school Chitsukhāchārya is held to be the third Āchārya. His book called 'Chitsukhi' or 'Tattvapradīpikā' is a well-known work. If we accept the conclusions of the modern scholars about Śāṅkarāchārya having been born in the fifth century A.D., even then Chitsukhāchārya will have to be placed somewhere in the sixth or seventh century A.D. at the latest, although really speaking Śrī Śāṅkarāchārya preceded the nativity of Jesus Christ (as is proved by the records preserved in the various Mutts of the Śāṅkara Sampradāya) and thus Chitsukhāchārya also flourished much earlier. Chitsukhāchārya wrote a commentary on the *Bhāgavata*, to which Madhvāchārya, Śridhara Swāmī and Vijayatīrtha have made references. Thus it is evident that the *Bhāgavata* was extant in Chitsukhāchārya's time.

4. In the Saraswati Bhavan Library of the Queen's College, Benares, an old manuscript of *Śrimad Bhāgavata* has been preserved, which has authentically been proved to belong to the twelfth century A.D. Bopadeva was not even born at that time.

5. Śrī Śāṅkarānanda, the well-known author of the 'Ātmapurāṇa', and the preceptor of Vidyāraṇya Swāmī, who is definitely known to have flourished in the 13th century refers at many places to *Śrimad Bhāgavata* in his commentary on the *Gītā* named 'Gīta-Tatparyabodhini', and quotes a number of verses from *Śrimad Bhāgavata* declaring them to be the very words of Śrī Bhagavān. How could Śrī Śāṅkarānanda have referred to the *Bhāgavata*, had it not been very popular in his time (12th century)? It, therefore, proves it beyond doubt that *Śrimad Bhāgavata* was quite popular in the twelfth century.

6. Āchārya Abhinavagupta, the famous exponent of the Pratyabhijñā school of Kashmir, has written a commentary on the *Gītā*, wherein he quotes extensively from *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* while commenting on Śloka 8 of the Chapter XIV. This commentary has been published. Abhinavagupta was born in the tenth century, as he has himself mentioned in his 'Bṛhat Pratyabhijñā-Vimarśinī'.

It has also to be borne in mind that Abhinavagupta was a Śaiva and Śrimad *Bhāgavata* is a book of Vaiṣṇava literature. He would have never referred to the *Bhāgavata*, had not the work been popular during that time. Besides, had the *Bhāgavata* been only an ordinary book recently written, it would not have been known so far as in Kashmir. Printing presses were not in existence in those days and Abhinavagupta belonged to the Śaiva school. That the *Bhāgavata* should have been quoted from by a Śaiva scholar like Abhinavagupta in a far-off place like Kashmir, clearly shows how popular the work must have been during his time.

7. Mātharāchārya wrote a commentary on the 'Sāṅkhya-Kārikā' of Iśvarakṛṣṇa. This commentary was translated into the Chinese during 557 to 569 A. D. by a Buddhist scholar named Paramārtha. It can be easily understood that the original must have been written at least a century or two before the said translation. In that commentary we find reference to Śrimad Bhāgavata I. vi. 35 and I. viii. 52. This proves that Śrimad Bhāgavata was in existence in the fifth century A. D.

8. There is a lot of mist over the date of Śankarāchārya, which makes it oscillate between the 3rd century B. C. to the 7th century A. D. Most of the scholars and docu-

ments existing in the Mutts are agreed on the point that he was born sometime before the Christian era. Śankarāchārya refers to Śrimad Bhāgavata in two places in his commentary on the “Vasudeva-Sahasra-Nāmāvalī”, which forms part of the *Padma-purāṇa*. Referring to the *Bhāgavata* he says therein “स आश्रयः परं ब्रह्म परमात्मा परात्परः”। इति भागवते.” And, again, in another place he quotes the verse beginning with ‘पश्यन्त्यदो रूप-मदभ्रचतुषा’ as from the *Bhāgavata*. Further in his works named “Śaiva Siddhānta-Sangraha” and “Chaturdaśamata-viveka” he refers to Śrimad Bhāgavata thus: ‘परम-हंसथर्मो भागवते पुराणे कृष्णेनोद्धवायोपदिष्टः,’ which means that in the *Bhāgavata* Śrī Kṛṣṇa has taught the duties of Paramahamsas to Uddhava.

There is a book of Stotras by Śankarāchārya, *Govindāṣṭaka* by name. In this work, there is a Śloka which is based on the Līlā of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in which He ate earth. It runs thus:—

मृत्त्वामत्सीहेति यशोदाताङ्गनशैश्वरसंत्रासम् ।
व्यादितवक्ष्मालोकितलोकालोकचतुर्दशलोकालिम् ॥

In another work 'Prabodha-Sudhākara' Āchārya Śankara, while referring to the childish sports of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, describes the delusion of Brahma and his stealing away of the young calves and cowherd boys, the subsequent appearance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself in all those forms and Balarāma's bewilderment to see the excessive love of the cows for their young ones. All this is based on *Srimad Bhāgavata*. While describing the ecstasy of the cowherd girls he verily follows the *Bhāgavata* and says in clear terms that these were the words of Śrī Vedavyāsa. Let us compare the Sloka of the *Bhāgavata* with that of Śrī Śankarāchārya:—

कस्याश्वित् पूतनायन्त्याः कृष्णायन्त्यपिवत् स्तनम् ।

—Bhāgavata

कापि च कृष्णायन्ती कस्याश्रितं पूतनायन्त्याः ।
अपिवद् स्तनमिति सादाद् व्यासो नारायणः प्राह ॥ १

—Śankarāchārya

Śankarāchārya not only literally follows Śrimad Bhāgavata but says that it was composed by Bhagavān Vyāsa. This proves that the Bhāgavata was in existence even before Śankara and that its author was Vyāsa himself.

9. It has been historically and traditionally proved that Śrī Govindapāda was the Guru of Śrī Śankarāchārya and Śrī Gouḍapādāchārya was the Guru of Govindapāda. Śrī Gouḍapādāchārya says in the exposition of 'Pañcikaraṇa': 'जगृहे पौरुषं रूपम् इति भागवतमुपन्यस्तम्'. This is the first verse of the third chapter of Skandha I. There is still another work by Śrī Gouḍapādāchārya, viz., a commentary on the 'Uttaragita'. There, too, he quotes the fourth Śloka of the fourteenth chapter of Skandha X, which runs thus:

ब्रेयम्भुतिं भक्तिमुदस्य ते विभो
क्षिदयन्ति ये केवलबोधलभ्यये ।
तेषामसौ छेषल एव शिष्यते
नान्यद् यथा खूलुषावचातिनाम् ॥

Not only does he quote from the Bhāgavata but in his Kārikās on the Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad he verily depends on the Bhāgavata for his expositions, inasmuch as some of the most important portions of the Māṇḍūkya-Kārikā are completely based on Śrimad Bhāgavata. Those who hold that Śrimad Bhāgavata was written after the Kārikās of Śrī Gouḍapādāchārya are not aware of the traditions of the Adwaita school, which hold that Śukadeva was a disciple of Vyāsa and Gouḍapāda was a disciple of Śukadeva.

10. Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India more than once from 957 to 1030 A. D. A

Muslim scholar, Alberuni by name, who accompanied Mahmud in one of his invasions stayed in India and studied Hindu religion and philosophy and wrote a book on the same subject in 1030 A. D. The book was translated into English in 1914 A. D. and was published in the Trubner Series of London. A Hindi translation of this book is also available now and it proves that Śrimad Bhāgavata was popular in those days and was held in great esteem.

11. In the excavations made in the village of Paharpur, some three miles from the Jamalganj Railway Station in the district of Rajshahi (Bengal), good many images have been discovered and they all belong to the fifth century. One of them is an image of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Some of the modern scholars hold that the Upasana of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa was not prevalent during the time when the Bhāgavata was written, else there would have been a reference to Śrī Rādhā in the Bhāgavata. Even if we accept their statement (which is, however, quite unwarranted), the most natural conclusion would be that Śrimad Bhāgavata was written much before the fifth century A. D.

12. Chand Bardai, the court-poet and minister of King Prithwiraj of Delhi, refers to Śrimad Bhāgavata in his famous work 'Prithwiraj-Raso'. Chand's fame as a poet was well established in 1191 and he was born much before Bopadeva. We give below the extracts from his work referring to Śrimad Bhāgavata and to the story of Parikṣit and the sports of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa:—

'भागवत्त सुनहि जो इह चित तौ सराप छुट्ट्य अक्लम ।'
'.....कीर शुकदेव परिषत् (परीक्षित) सम ।'
'लीला ललित मुरारकी सुख मुनि कहिय अपार ।'

Again, of those who ascribe the authorship of *Śrimad Bhāgavata* to Bopadeva there are some who allege that he was a real brother of Jayadeva, the famous author of 'Gita-Govinda'. This is equally incorrect inasmuch as Jayadeva was a court-poet of King Lakṣmaṇa Sen of Bengal, who ascended the throne in the year 1118, while Bopadeva was born in the 13th century. Moreover, the name of Jayadeva finds mention in Chand Bardai's 'Raso'. This also proves that *Śrimad Bhāgavata* existed long before the time of Bopadeva.

Now the question naturally arises as to when the *Bhāgavata* was written. In the *Padmapurāṇa* we have references to the 'Saptāha' of *Śrimad Bhāgavata* at three places:

(i) When thirty years of Kaliyuga had elapsed after the departure of Śri Kṛṣṇa from this world, Śri Śukadeva recited the *Bhāgavata* to Parīkṣit from the ninth day of the month of Bhadrapada.

(ii) When 230 years of the Kaliyuga had passed, Gokarṇa recited the *Bhāgavata* to Dhundhukārī and began it from the 9th of the bright half of the lunar month of Āśādha.

(iii) In Kaliyuga Samvat 260 Sanatkumāra recited the *Bhāgavata* to Śri Nārada. (See *Bhāgavata-Māhātmya*, Chapter 6).

Thus it is clear that Bhagavān Vyāsa himself composed the *Mahābhārata* and *Śrimad Bhāgavata* some thirty years after the departure of Śri Kṛṣṇa from this earth.*

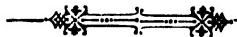


The Padma-Purana on Srimad Bhagavata

"He who has not heard the recital of the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa*, who has not adored God, the Supreme Purusa, and has not offered oblation of food to the mouth of a Brahman, his birth as a human being has been quite fruitless.

"Fie upon the beast in human shape, who being impure at heart, or due to the influence of evil company, does not feel attracted to the stories of God's sports! He is a useless dead-weight to the world—such is the view expressed about him by ancient seers and sages."

(*Padma-Purāṇa, Uttara Khaṇḍa*)



Salutations to Sri Sukadeva

यं प्रकृजन्तमनुपेतमगेतकृत्यं
द्वैपायनो विरहकातर आजुहाव ।
पुत्रेति तन्मयतया तरवोऽभिनेदु-
स्तं सर्वभूतहृदयं मुनिमानतोऽसि ॥

(*Srimad Bhāgavata* I. ii. 2)

"Śrī Śukadeva renounced the world even before he was initiated into the Vedas, and having no duties to discharge, set out from his father's hermitage in order to lead the life of a recluse. His father, Bhagavān Vedavyāsa, who could not bear his separation, felt much agitated in heart and followed him shouting 'O my darling ! pray listen to me.' It was the trees of the forest that responded to his call at that time on behalf of Śrī Śukadeva, who had identified himself with them, nay, with the whole universe. To him, who is thus enshrined in the heart of all beings as their very self, I make my obeisance."

यः स्वानुभावमखिलश्रुतिसारमक-
मध्यात्मदीपमतितीर्थं तमोऽन्धम् ।
संसारिणां करुणयाह पुराणगुण
तं व्यासपूनुमुपयामि गुरुं मुनीनाम् ॥

(*Ibid.* I. ii. 3)

"*Srimad Bhāgavata* is a sacred book full of esoteric teachings, and ranks among the eighteen Purāṇas. It reveals the Divine Reality and forms the essence of all the Vedas. It is a light illuminating the truth of the spirit for those who would emerge from

the thick darkness of ignorance. It is out of mercy for such Jīvas, enmeshed in Samsāra, that the son of Śrī Vyāsadeva has given out this unique work. In him, the preceptor of sages and seers, I take refuge in all humility."

स्वसुखनिभृतचेतास्तदन्युदस्तान्यभावे-
अप्यजितरुचिरलीलाकृष्णसारसतादीयम् ।
व्यतनुत कृष्णा यतारबदीर्पं पुराणं
तमखिलवृजिनप्नं व्यासपूनुं नतोऽसि ॥

(*Ibid.* XII. xii. 68)

"The mind of Śrī Śukadeva was completely merged in Ātmic bliss and had altogether shaken off the notion of duality. Yet the story of the charming sports of the divine Lord captivated his heart; and it was, therefore, that he was graciously pleased to amplify the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, which reveals the Divine truth. To that Śukadeva, son of Vyāsa and the dispeller of all sins, I pay my profound respects."

योगीन्द्राय नमस्तस्मै शुक्राय ब्रह्मरूपिणे ।
संसारसर्पदृष्टं यो विष्णुरात्ममूरुचद ॥

(*Ibid.* XII. xiii. 21)

"We bow to Śrī Śukadeva, the Lord of Yogīs, who has become one with the Supreme and who liberated Parīkṣit, bitten by the serpent of mundane existence, by giving out to him the message of *Srimad Bhāgavata*."



The Kalyana-Kalpataru



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa

Srimad Bhagavata

Skandha X

Part I

Chapter I

THE SUPREME LORD CONSOLES GODDESS EARTH, MARRIAGE OF VASUDEVA AND DEVAKI, AND MURDER BY KAMSA OF DEVAKI'S SIX SONS

King Pariksit, addressing Sri Sukadeva, said: Lord, you have graciously fully narrated the origin and growth of the Lunar and Solar dynasties, and the highly wonderful accounts of the kings of both the dynasties. O great among the sages, you have specially described the Yadu dynasty which consisted of men who were inherently pious in character. Now, O Lord, kindly relate to us the great deeds of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who with His Aṁśa (part manifestation), Śrī Baladeva, took the human form and appeared in that family. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the soul of the Universe, the protector of all beings. Pray describe in detail whatever deeds were performed by the glorious Lord, appearing as an Avatāra in the house of Yadu. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's qualities and the story of His deeds are so sweet and so attractive to the ear that even freed souls, who have got rid of desires, constantly sing them. They are the one remedy for bringing release from Samsāra, the ever recurring migration of the soul from birth to death and death to birth. They are most entertaining to the ear and mind even of those who are attached to the world. Other

than a butcher, or killer of the soul, who is there on earth who should feel reluctant to listen, again and again, to the recital of His story? O sage, please describe to us the powers and deeds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was like a raft to my grandfather and granduncles for crossing the ocean of Kaurava forces made impassable by the presence of whales in the form of great warriors like Bhiṣma and others, who vanquished even the celestials in battle. With the aid of Śrī Kṛṣṇa my grandfather crossed this ocean as one crosses the small footprint of a calf. When my body, the only seed of the Kaurava and Pāṇḍava families, got burnt in the womb of my mother by the missile hurled by Drona's son, and my mother sought His shelter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa armed with His Chakra (discus) appeared in the womb of my mother and protected this body. Śrī Kṛṣṇa assumed a human form at His own free will; He permeates and pervades all embodied beings in the form of Puruṣa and Kāla, and brings them death as well as Mokṣa. (1-7).

O sage, you have described Sankarṣaṇadeva, appearing as Śrī Balarāma, as the son of Rohinī. Again, you have counted

Him as one of Devaki's sons. How was it possible for Him to be a son of two mothers without a change of the body ? Leaving His father's house, why did the glorious Śri Kṛṣṇa go to Vraja ? Where did the Lord of Vādavas reside with His kith and kin ? What did He do while dwelling in Vraja as well as in the city of Mathura, and why did He, with His own hand, kill Kāṁsa, His maternal uncle, who considering His relation did not deserve to be killed by Him ? Assuming a human form, how many years did He dwell with His kinsmen, the Vṛṣnis, at Dwarka ? How many were the consorts of Śri Kṛṣṇa ? O sage perfect in wisdom, kindly describe in detail all this to me, and every other deed of Śri Kṛṣṇa not covered by my question. I am extremely eager to hear and know all this. O sage, though I am fasting without even drinking water, pangs of unbearable hunger do not affect me, drinking as I am the nectar of Śri Hari's stories flowing through your lotus-like lips. (8—13).

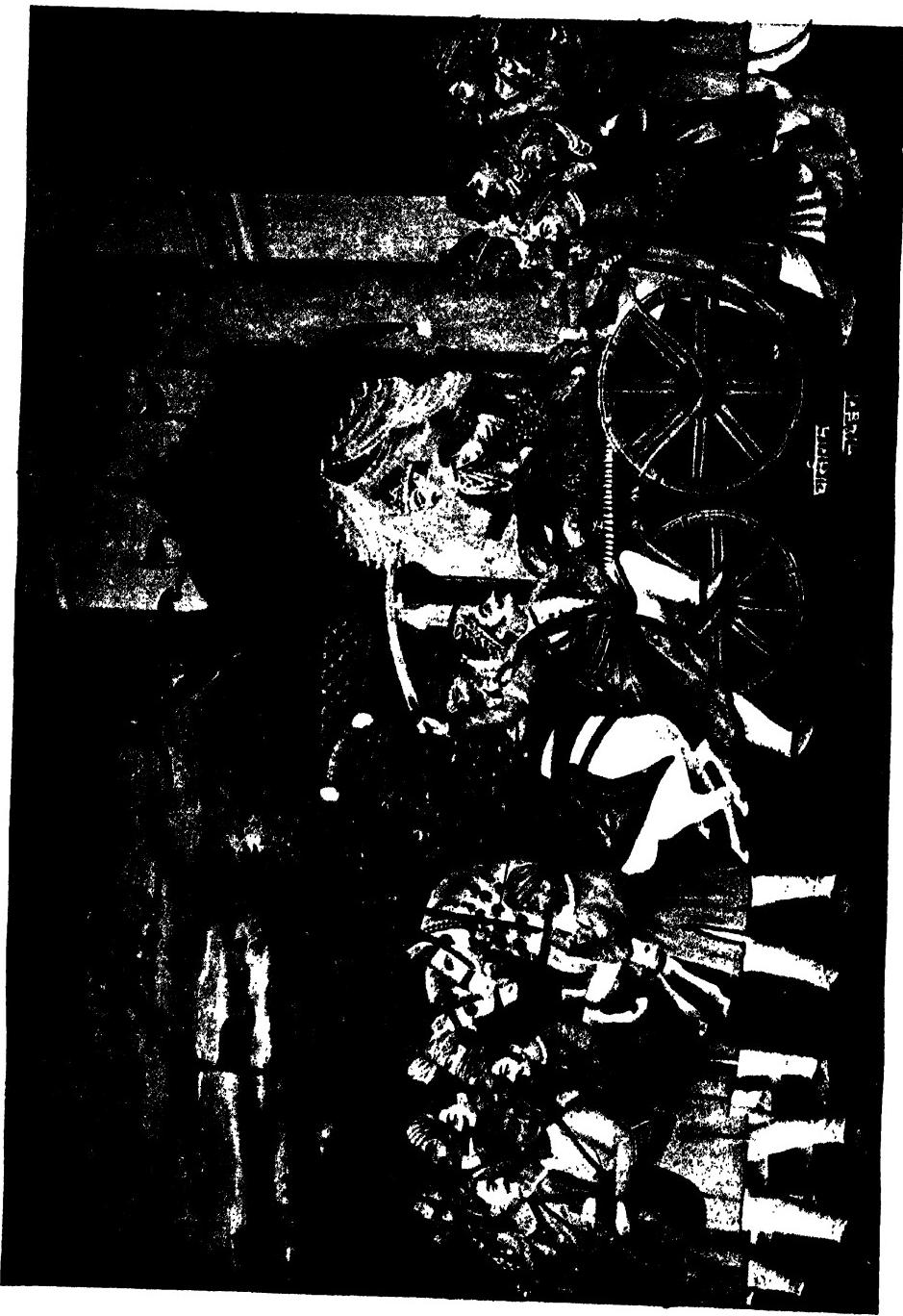
Suta said: Śaunaka ! hearing this laudable question, the worshipful son of Vyāsa, foremost among the votaries of Śri Hari, complimented Parīkṣit and immediately began to discourse on the life and doings of Śri Kṛṣṇa, which destroy the impurities of Kali. (14).

Sri Sukadeva said: O saintly king, your mind is now properly directed ; for you have developed a natural liking for the stories of Bhagavān Śri Kṛṣṇa, which purify all the three, viz, he who describes them, he who questions about them and he who listens to them, even as the Ganges, or the bath water of Śalagrama, purifies all. (15-16).

O king, overrun by million of Daityas in the form of pampered and arrogant kings

and groaning under their unbearable weight, the goddess Earth sought refuge with Brahmā. Assuming the form of a cow, her face flooded with tears, crying aloud pitifully and in great distress, she approached Brahmā and told him of her woes. Hearing her complaint, Brahmā set out with God Śiva, followed by her and other important celestials, to the shore of the ocean of milk. On arrival there, Brahmā and the other gods with a serene mind prayed to the Supreme Person Viṣṇu, the God of gods and Lord of the Universe, in terms of the Puruṣasūkta. In the course of the prayer, Brahmā attained Samādhi, and in that state heard a voice speaking in the sky. Then, addressing the gods, Brahmā, the Creator, said : "O immortals, hear from me the words of the Supreme Person and speedily act as directed by Him. Let there be no delay. The Lord knew the affliction of Earth even before we approached Him with our prayer. He is the Supreme God of gods. Therefore, when He descends and walks Himself on the Earth for reducing her burden through His own power in the form of Time, may you help him in His work by taking birth with your Aṁśas in the family of Yadu. The most glorious and Perfect Person, Hari, will in person manifest Himself in the house of Vasudeva. For His service and the service of His consorts, let celestial women take birth on earth. To do what pleases the Supreme Lord, the self-luminous Lord Ananta, endowed with a thousand faces, who is an Aṁśa (part manifestation) of the Supreme Lord, will precede Him as His elder brother. And the Lord's most powerful Yogamāyā, by whom the universe is deluded, will also, under His orders, take Her birth as a part manifestation, with the purpose of carrying out His will." (17—25).

The Kalyana-Kalpataru



Rama attempting to murder Devaki

Sri Sukadeva said: Parīkṣit, having thus directed the celestials, the lordly Brahmā, the head of Prajāpatis, consoled the Earth with his words and returned to Brahmaloka, his exalted region. In ancient times Śūrasena was the chief of Yadus, who residing in the city of Mathura ruled the territories of the Māthuras and Śūrasenas. Thenceforward Mathura became the capital for all the kings of the Yādava dynasty. Mathura is exalted by the eternal presence of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On the celebration of his marriage with Devakī, Vasudeva, son of Śūra, started for his house in a procession through the city placing his newly wedded wife in a chariot. For the pleasure of his cousin, Devakī, Kaṁsa, son of Ugrasena, took the reins of the horses in his own hands, surrounded himself by hundreds of golden cars. Devaki's father was Devaka, who in his great affection for his daughter gave her a dowry of four hundred elephants decked in gold, fifteen thousand horses and eighteen hundred chariots and two hundred pretty girls adorned with gold ornaments as her maid-servants, when Devaki started for her husband's house. As the bride and the bridegroom were about to start, the conch, the trumpet, the drum and the kettle-drum were all simultaneously sounded to lend auspiciousness to the occasion. Kaṁsa was driving the horses by holding the reins when a voice from the sky addressed him and said: "O fool, the eighth child born of the womb of the girl you are now conducting will be your slayer." Kaṁsa was extremely wicked and sinful, ruthless and impudent, nay, a veritable disgrace to the family of the Bhojas. As soon as he heard the voice, he seized, sword in hand, his cousin by her braid with a view to kill her on the spot. Finding him intent upon the detestable

action, Vasudeva pleaded with Kaṁsa in consoling and conciliatory words. (26-36).



Vasudeva said: "O Prince, you are the glory of the Bhoja family; you possess qualities which are praised by the greatest warriors. How can it be possible for you to kill a woman, specially a cousin of yours, on the festive occasion of her marriage ? O great among heroes, when a creature is born, death is born along with its body; whether now or at the end of a century, death is sure to overtake the body. When one body dies, the Jīva is compelled by the force of Karma to assume another body, and leave the old. When a man walks, his one foot is fixed on the ground and the other is thrown forward for the next step. The caterpillar moves by taking hold of one blade of grass and releasing its hold on another. Even so the embodied Jīva leaves one body after he has assumed another according to his Karma. Just as in a dream or a reverie a person fancies himself to be what he strongly desired in relation to what is seen and what is heard in the waking

hours, even so he forgets his previous body and attains a new one after death according to his Karma, thought and constant desires. The mind of the Jīva is subject to many modifications. At the hour of death the impressions of past Karma appear before the Jīva, and impelled by fructifying Karma whatever body created by Māyā he identifies himself with, he is born with that body intensely thought of at the last moment. Just as luminaries like the sun and the moon are reflected in water or other liquid substances like oil etc., and when the force of the wind shakes the surface of the liquid, the reflections appear to be shaking, even so the Jīva placed in the midst of bodies produced by Māyā is seized with attachment for them and imagines their appearance or disappearance as his own birth or death. Therefore, a person seeking his own welfare should in no case do wrong to anyone; for being subject to Karma, the wrong-doer will have cause to fear from enemies in this world and retribution in the next. O Kaṁsa, this cousin of yours is a small, helpless girl fit to be treated as your own daughter. She has gone through the auspicious ceremonial of marriage only a short time before. Being kind to the helpless and distressed, you should not kill her." (37-45).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, Vasudeva thus argued with Kaṁsa applying both soft words and reasons which might cause fear; but being cruel-hearted and addicted to the path of Rākṣasas, Kaṁsa did not change his mind. Perceiving that Kaṁsa was adamant, Vasudeva thought that the immediate danger should somehow be averted. He argued within himself—"Every thoughtful person should endeavour to avert death to the best of his wisdom and strength. If even after his best effort he fails to avert it, no blame will attach to him. I shall

rescue this helpless young lady by making an offer of her sons to this representative of death, Kaṁsa. If sons are born to me and Kaṁsa does not die in the meanwhile, what would happen? May he not suffer death at the hands of my sons? The ways of Providence are, indeed, inscrutable. Imminent death is sometimes averted, and what has been averted may appear again. In a forest conflagration one cannot be sure what tree will remain and what will be burnt to ashes; trees near at hand may escape fire, whereas trees at a distance may catch it. All this is regulated by unseen Providence. Similarly, it is extremely difficult to know beforehand what particular body of a Jīva will run its course, and what will disappear through one reason or another.' Having thus considered the problem to the best of his intellectual powers, Vasudeva honoured the wicked Kaṁsa by words of praise and esteem. O Parikṣit, Kaṁsa was by nature extremely cruel and shameless so when Vasudeva spoke, his heart was full of pain and suffering. Yet he put on a cheerful countenance and smilingly said. (46-53).

Vasudeva said: O gentle Kaṁsa, you have nothing to fear from Devakī, the voice in the sky clearly conveyed this. Your fear will arise from her sons, but I shall put them all into your hands as soon as they are born. (54).

Sri Suka said: O Parikṣit, Kaṁsa was aware that Vasudeva would not tell a lie, and he realized that what the latter said was reasonable. He, therefore, desisted from killing his cousin Devakī. Pleased at this, Vasudeva extolled Kaṁsa and repaired to his own dwelling. Devakī was an extremely virtuous lady, devoted to the Almighty Lord, and imbued with the presence of all the gods in her body. When the time came, she brought forth year by year eight sons and a daughter. The first-born son was

called Kīrtimān. Vasudeva gave him over to Kaṁsa with a heavy heart. He suffered intense pain when delivering the child; but he was more afraid of falsehood than of anything else. O Parīkṣit, the righteous never flinch from any pain, and the wise do not long for anything. The wicked, on the contrary, can commit the worst possible sin. And those who have conquered their senses, and have installed the Lord in their heart, can undergo any amount of sacrifice in the world. When Kaṁsa saw that Vasudeva maintained a balanced outlook whether his child lived or was put to death, and was devoted to truth, he was greatly pleased, and smilingly said—“O Vasudeva, take back this child; I have nothing to fear from him. The ethereal voice predicted my death at the hands of your eighth child.” Thereupon Vasudeva returned with his son; but he did not feel happy over the words of the wicked man, who had no control over his mind. (55—61).

O Parīkṣit, then the divine sage Nārada came to Kaṁsa and meeting him privately, spoke to him thus: ‘O Kaṁsa, Nanda and other Gopas who dwell in Vraja and their women, Vasudeva and other Viṣṇis, Devakī and

other women of the family of Yadu and all relations and kinsmen of Nanda and Vasudeva—these are all celestials in disguise; those among them who are now engaged in your service are also gods.’ The sage further informed Kaṁsa that the earth being afflicted by Asuras, the stage is being set for their destruction. Kaṁsa now firmly believed that the Yādavas were all gods, and the son to be born of Devakī, who would appear for his destruction, was Viṣṇu Himself. On the departure of the sage, therefore, he put Devakī and Vasudeva in chains and kept them under strict confinement. He killed every son born of them, suspecting him to be Viṣṇu. O Parīkṣit, full of greed and thirsting after the life of others, kings of the earth are often found to kill their own mother, father, brothers and friends. Kaṁsa knew that he was himself the great Asura Kālanemi, who had been killed by Viṣṇu. He, therefore, began to cherish enmity towards the Yādavas. As he was extremely powerful, he put under confinement his own father Ugrasena, the lord of Bhojas, Yadus, and Andhakas, and himself took up the reins of government over the territory of the Śūrasenas. (62—69).

Chapter II

THE SUPREME PERSON ENTERS DEVAKĪ'S WOMB; THE IMMORTALS OFFER PRAISES TO THE FETUS

Sri Sukadeva said: Parīkṣit ! Kaṁsa was very powerful himself. In addition, he formed an alliance with Jarāsandha, the king of Magadha, and was aided by Asuras like Pralamba, Baka, Chāṇūra, Tṛṇavarta, Agha, Muṣṭika, Ariṣṭa, Dwividha, Pūtanā, Keśi, Dhenuka and Asura kings like Baṇa and Naraka. With the help of these allies he began to make short work of the Yādavas. Being molested and terrorized by him the Yādavas left their original

homes and began to settle in the territories of the Kurus, Pañchālas, Kekayas, Śālvias, Vidarbhas, Niṣādhas, Videhas and Kosalas. Some of his relations (like Akrūra) made a show of submission to Kaṁsa and continued to serve him externally. When Kaṁsa had killed six sons of Devakī, one after another, she conceived the seventh child, who was a part manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and was known as Śrī Śeṣa or Śrī Ananta. This conception was a source of

joy to Devaki, but at the same time it caused her grief from fear that the babe when born might fall a victim to the wrath of the inexorable Kaṁsa. (1-5).

The all-pervading Lord, however, observed that the Yadavas, who regarded Him as their sole Lord, were being terribly persecuted by Kaṁsa. He thereupon gave the following instruction to Yogamāyā: "O blessed goddess, go to Vraja. You will find the place very attractive, full of cows and the hamlets of cowherds. At Nanda-gokula dwells Rohinī, a wife of Vasudeva. There are other wives of Vasudeva, who being afraid of Kaṁsa live concealed in out-of-the-way places. At this time My Arīṣa, who is called Śeṣa, has entered the womb of Devaki. Please take him out of that womb and transfer him to Rohinī's womb. Now, O blessed goddess, I shall Myself be born as a son of Devaki with all My knowledge, strength and other parts. And you incarnate yourself as the daughter of Yaśodā, wife of Nanda. You will possess the power to grant all boons desired by men, and they will propitiate you with offerings of incense, eatable articles, and other courses of worship, knowing you as the supreme dispenser of all boons and gifts. They will erect temples for you and will worship you under various names, such as Durgā, Bhadrakālī, Vijayā, Vaiṣṇavī, Kumudā, Chanḍikā, Kṛṣṇā, Madhavī, Kanyā, Māyā, Nārāyaṇī, Iśānī, Śāradā, Ambikā, and so on. Śrī Śeṣa will be called Sankarṣana in the world from the circumstance of having been removed from Devaki's womb. He will be known also as 'Rama' for being a source of delight to the world, and as 'Balabhadra' on account of His immense strength. (6-13).

Thus commanded by the glorious Lord, Yogamāyā agreed to do as He bid Her.

Circumambulating the Lord and getting down to the earth, She carried out all She had been ordered to do. When She removed the child in the womb of Devaki and placed Him in that of Rohinī, people widely talked about it and expressed sorrow by saying, 'Alas, poor Devaki has suffered a miscarriage.' (14-15).

God is the asylum of His devotees. He is present everywhere, in all forms. He does not require to come and go. He now manifested Himself in the mind of Vasudeva with all His parts, and in all His glory. Being already present there, He only manifested Himself from the unmanifest state. Imbued with the glorious presence of the Supreme Person, Vasudeva assumed the lustre of the Sun, and appeared to others both inaccessible and unconquerable. Thereafter Devaki bore the Divine spark, the most auspicious for the world, transferred to her by Vasudeva. She held the Lord, the Soul of the universe, the All-Self, in her mind, in its purest state, even as the eastern horizon holds the delightful moon. The whole universe dwells in the Lord. Devaki now became the dwelling-place of the Lord Himself. But being confined in Kaṁsa's prison, she did not shine best, as a flame of fire under cover and sacred lore in a narrow-minded scholar who would not impart it to others, do not shine. People outside the prison, therefore, remained unaware of her splendour. But when Kaṁsa saw her, filled with the presence of God and full of pure smiles, illuminating the prison with the lustre of her person, he said to himself—"This time Viṣṇu Himself, who aims at my life, must have entered her womb, for never before Devaki looked so brilliant as now. What should I do now without loss of time? Śrī Hari bent on accomplishing the purpose of the gods would not

slacken His effort. Murder of Devakī would not be proper. She is a woman, a cousin of mine, and is carrying a child. Her murder would wreck my reputation, end my prosperity and cut short my lease of life all at a time. He who lives a life of gross cruelty is already a dead man though alive. People curse him during his life, and when dead he certainly goes to the hell of blinding darkness where the man who regards his body as his self goes." Reasoning with himself thus, Kaṇṭsa though capable of killing Devakī desisted of his own accord from the cruel purpose; but cherishing the utmost hatred for Śrī Hari, He remained eagerly awaiting His birth. While sitting on his throne, lying in bed, standing, dining or walking, he began to think of Śrī Kṛṣṇa incessantly, and saw that the whole world was full of Him. (16—24).

O Parīkṣit, Brahmā and Śiva together with Nārada and other sages, and the gods with their attendants, came to Kaṇṭsa's prison, and in winning words offered their



praises to the Lord, who showers all the desired blessings: "O Lord, Your thoughts are true. Truthfulness is the best means to realize You. Before creation, after dissolution, and during the existence of the world You exist as Truth. You are the cause of the five forms of Truth—the five objects of perception, viz., earth, water, fire, air and ether, and also abide in them as the indwelling spirit. You are the reality underlying the phenomenal world. From You proceed sweet speech and the capacity to see everything with an equal eye. O Lord, You are the very embodiment of Truth. As our protector, we all take refuge in You. This world is like an eternal tree; it rests upon one Prakṛti (Nature); it bears two fruits—happiness and misery; it has three roots—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas; it yields four kinds of sap—Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa; five are the means to perceive it—ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose; it possesses six states or characteristics—birth, existence, growth, transformation, decay and destruction. This tree contains seven layers of bark, which are the seven constituents of the body, viz., sap, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen virile. It has eight branches, viz., the five elements, mind, Buddhi (intellect) and Ahankāra (ego); nine hollows (the nine gates of the body); ten leaves, which are the ten Prāṇas—Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna, Samāna, Naga, Kūrma, Kṛkala, Devadatta and Dhānajaya; and two birds, viz., the Jīva and God. You alone are the source of this world, You are its final resort and You are its protector and benefactor. Those whose intellect is obscured by Your Māyā, and who have thus lost the power of understanding this Truth see gods like Brahmā, who preside over the functions of creation, existence and dissolution of this universe as different

from one another. But the man of wisdom sees You and only You in every form. You are the soul, which is constituted of Consciousness itself. You assume many Forms for the welfare of the world consisting of animate and inanimate objects. These Forms of Yours are all transcendent, consisting of Sattva in its purest or unmixed state. Through them You bring happiness to the righteous and inflict punishment on the wicked. In this way Your presence is, indeed, inauspicious to the latter. O lotus-eyed Lord, rare are the people who concentrate their mind in meditation on You, the sole refuge of all objects and all creatures, and adopting Your feet as their raft cross the ocean of existence as easily as one crosses the hoof-mark of a calf. Why should they not do so? All saints have crossed this ocean with the help of this very raft. O self-luminous Lord, Your devotees are sincere lovers and true well-wishers of the world. They not only themselves cross the impassable and terrible sea of Samsara, but leave behind them for the good of others the raft of Your lotus-like feet. You shower infinite Grace on them. To them, You are the very embodiment of Grace. O lotus-eyed Lord, those who do not take shelter under Your sacred feet and whose understanding is clouded through lack of devotion to You, falsely imagine themselves to be Muktas or freed. But they are really in bondage. If they with great difficulty attain the highest state through penance and self-discipline, they fall from it owing to lack of regard for Your feet. But, O Lord, those who are Your devotees, who have genuinely attached their love to Your sacred feet, do not fall from the true path like those who take pride as followers of the path of Knowledge. Your devotees fearlessly go about, O Lord, setting their feet on the

heads of obstructions and impediments; for, You are Yourself their protector. For the protection of the world You manifest Your transcendent, divine and auspicious Form, which is absolutely pure, the very embodiment of the principles of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Because of the manifestation of this Form people endeavour to worship You through study of the Vedas, and practice of rituals, Yoga, penance and Samadhi. O Lord, You are the Creator of all. Had there been no manifestation of this transcendent Form of Yours, which is Your very essence, full of the purest element of Sattva, and wholly free from the least trace of impure Gunas like Rajas and Tamas, there would be no realization by anyone of Absolute Knowledge, which wipes out the notions of difference engendered by ignorance. It is true that all the three Gunas perceived in the world belong to You, they derive their life and power from You. But the faculties which reveal these Gunas can only know You by inference, they cannot directly perceive Your transcendent Form. In short, direct realization of You is possible only through Your grace gained through the service of Your transcendent Form. O Lord, the mind and the words of the Veda can only infer You, for You are their seer and not their object. That is why through Your attributes, deeds and births the reality about Your Name and Form cannot be fully known or described. And yet, O Lord, Your devotees realize You through contemplation and worship. He who engages himself in the hearing, chanting, remembrance and contemplation of Your auspicious Names and Forms and devotes his mind to the service of Your sacred feet has not to mount again the whirligig of Samsara, which brings births and deaths. O Lord, the remover of distress, You are the God of gods; the earth

constitutes Your very feet. The burden of the earth has been removed by Your very birth thereon; and what a joy, Lord, that we would see the earth adorned with your charming footprints full of auspicious marks, and the heaven blessed by Your Grace. O omnipotent Lord, You are Unborn. If we attempt through reasoning to understand the cause of Your descent, we shall have to declare that You take birth in the world at Your own sweet will as a matter of Sport. For You are beyond duality, the substrate of all; and the creation, preservation and destruction of the world are imposed on You only by Avidyā or Ignorance. O Lord, just as You protected us and the three worlds at other times incarnating Yourself as Matsya (Fish), Hayagrīva (Horse-Man), Katchhapa (Tortoise), Narasiṁha (Man-Lion), Varaha (Boar), Haṁsa (Swan), Rāma, Paraśurāma

and Vāmana, even so relieve, again, the burden of the earth. O foremost son of Yadus, we make our salutations to You." Addressing Devakī, they said: "O mother, it is a matter for gratification that the Supreme Lord, with His Knowledge, strength and other parts, has entered your womb for our welfare. Please do not be afraid of Kaṁsa any more. Kaṁsa now stands at the very brink of destruction. Your son will be the protector of the Yadus." (25—41).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, Brahmā and the other gods offered in these words their praises to the Perfect Lord. None can say positively that 'this' is the Form of the Lord. People describe Him according to their respective knowledge and realization. On the conclusion of their praises, the gods, headed by Brahmā and Rudra, returned to their celestial regions. (42).

Chapter III

BHAGAVĀN ŚRĪ KRŚNA'S MANIFESTATION

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parikṣit, now the most auspicious and favourable time arrived. The star Rohiṇī was ascendant. All the constellations, planets and stars in the sky wore a peaceful and gentle appearance. The cardinal points were clear and tranquil. Countless stars began to shine unobscured. The earth with its cities, towns, villages, hamlets of cowherds and mines of diamonds and precious metals became full of hope and good omen. Water in the rivers became crystal clear. Though it was night, lotuses opened their petals and made lakes and ponds shine with the lustre of their full-blown appearance. Rows of trees in the forest became heavily laden with flowers. Birds were singing and bees were

humming on them. The wind became pure and blowing softly and wafting welcome fragrance appeared delightful to the sense of touch. The fires maintained by Brahmins had gone out due to Kaṁsa's persecution, but now they suddenly burst into flames. The virtuous, who had been praying for the suppression of Asuras, had their minds filled with delight. When the time for the Lord's manifestation arrived, celestial drums began to reverberate without being beaten, Kinnaras and Gandharvas (celestial songsters) began to sing, Siddhas and Chāraṇas (celestial bards) offered their praises, and Vidyādhara women along with Apsarās (celestial nymphs) danced. Being filled with joy, immortals holding high position in heaven as

well as sages began to shower flowers. It was the middle of night. The world was covered by a fall of thick darkness. At the approach of the moment of the Lord's manifestation water-laden clouds descending very near the sea began to rumble at a low pitch. Just then Bhagavān Viṣṇu, who dwells in every heart, revealed Himself in His full glory from the womb of Devakī, who was like unto a goddess, even as the full moon appears on the eastern horizon. (1—8).

Vasudeva saw that a most wonderful child was present before him. The eyes of the child were as soft and as large as the lotus. His four arms bore respectively the



conch, the club, the discus and the lotus. The mark of Śrivatsa, like a beautiful golden line, adorned His breast. The jewel Kaustubha hanging from His neck spread its lustre. His most beautiful body, blue in colour like the rain-bearing cloud, was covered with a piece of cloth of yellow col-

our (Pitambara). The bright rays emanating from the most valuable jewels on His crown and ear-rings made His profuse and beautiful locks of curly hair shine as rays of the sun. He appeared radiantly charming with His most valuable and brilliant zone, armlets, bangles and other ornaments. When Vasudeva observed that God Himself was present before him as his son, his eyes at first dilated from amazement; then he was transported with delight when his mind fully comprehended the joyous event; and in his hurry to celebrate the happy occasion of Śri Kṛṣṇa's descent, he at once made a mental resolve of giving ten thousand cows to the Brahmins. Parikṣit, the lying-in-chamber was illumined by the brightness of Śri Kṛṣṇa's Form. When Vasudeva realized that the child before him was the Supreme Person, the Paramātmā Himself, his fear began to disappear owing to awareness of the greatness of the Lord. Collecting his mental powers he bent in humility before the Lord, and with folded hands offered his praises. (9—12).

Sri Vasudeva said: I have realized that You are the Supreme Person Himself, who lives beyond Prakṛti. You are Knowledge absolute and Bliss absolute. You are the witness of all minds. At the beginning of creation You create this universe, consisting of the three Guṇas, out of Your own Prakṛti. Then, even though You have not entered it, You appear as if you are in it. Just as when Mahat and the other causal principles remain separate, their potencies also carry on separate existence; and when they combine with the sixteen evolutes like the senses, they bring the Universe into existence; and bringing it into being they appear to have entered it, though as a matter of fact they do not

enter it—for they are already present in the objects formed out of their combination—even so Reason can only infer the characteristics of Guṇas, and the senses only perceive objects which are creations of Guṇas. And though You are in them, You are not cognized by mere cognition of the Guṇas. The reason for this is that You are everything, You are the soul of everything, You are the all-pervading, absolutely true Essence. The Guṇas cannot cover You, therefore You have no distinction of within and without. How will You, then, enter anything? That is why though You do not enter the region of Prakṛti, You appear as if You are in it. He who concludes that the Guṇas, of which he is a witness, are different from the Ātmā (Soul), is an ignorant man; for, when properly investigated, all objects other than the Ātmā (Soul) will appear as mere words, having no substance at their bottom. How can he be regarded as wise, who holds as real objects whose existence cannot be maintained by reason,—which are, in fact, negatived by reason? O Lord, people say that You are beyond action, beyond the Guṇas and beyond all modifications; and yet the creation, preservation and destruction of the world proceed from You. This cannot be impossible for You, the Supreme Brahma, the Supreme Ruler, the repository of all glory. Because You are the substrate of Guṇas, the function of Guṇas is imposed upon You. For the protection of the three worlds You assume through Your Māya the Sattvic white Form (of Viṣṇu, who preserves), the Rajasic red Form (form of Brahma, the Creator) for creation, and the dark Tamasic Form (the form of Rudra, the Destroyer) at the time of destruction. O Lord, You are the repository of all power, the Supreme

Ruler of all. You have incarnated in my house for the protection of the world. Innumerable Asura chiefs assuming the name of kings stride the world with their powerful hosts. You will put an end to them. O God of gods, this Kaṇsa is extremely wicked. Learning that You will appear in our house, he has killed all Your elder brothers. And now, directly he is informed by his servants of Your descent he will, with a drawn sword, break into this prison. (13—22).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, Devakī also observed that all the marks and characteristics of the Supreme Person were present in her son. She had at first felt nervous through fear of Kaṇsa; but the next moment she was supremely happy, and with smiles on her face and with the purest of sentiments she offered her praises to the Lord in the following terms. (23).

Mother Devaki said: O Lord, You are the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu Himself, who illumines the mental faculties, whom the Vedas describe as the Unmanifest, the First Cause, Perfect Brahma, the repository of Light, destitute of all Guṇas, modifications and attributes, actionless, absolute Existence. When the full span of life of Brahmā, consisting of two Parārdhas, comes to an end, and the whole creation is destroyed through the power of Time, and the five elements get absorbed into Ahankāra (Ego), the Ahankāra into Mahat, and the Mahat into Prakṛti itself—You alone remain as residue at that time. That is why You have assumed ‘Śeṣa’ (Remainder) as one of Your Names. O Eternal Ruler of Prakṛti! mighty and infinite Time, divided into innumerable divisions from a wink to a year, whose cyclic movement keeps the universe into activity, is nothing but Your Sport (Lila). You are the

Supreme Ruler, the Abode of Security ; I take refuge in You ! O Lord, this humble creature was in the grip of Death. Afraid of the python of Death, she ran about all the worlds ; but nowhere did she find a place where she could live void of fear. It is a great fortune that she has today reached the lotus of Your sacred feet. She now rests in peace and security. To say nothing of others, Death himself will now run away from her out of fear. O Lord, You are the rescuer of Your servants from fear. We are mortally afraid of wicked Kaṇṭsa, son of Ugrasena; pray protect us. One word more : this Divine Form of Yours, bearing four arms, is an object of meditation. Pray do not manifest It to men grossly attached to the body of flesh and bones. O Slayer of Madhu, let not sinful Kaṇṭsa know of Your birth from my womb. Timid by nature, I tremble at the name of Kaṇṭsa for Your sake. O Soul of the Universe, this Form of Yours is supernatural. Please withdraw this superb four-armed Form of Yours, adorned with the conch, discus, club and lotus, and assume the ordinary form of a human child. At the time of final Dissolution (Pralaya), You hold in Your Person the entire universe as naturally as a person carries with him the space within the pores of his body. That very Almighty Lord, the Supreme Person, lived in my womb—this was nothing but a wonderful act on Your part of imitating the world ! (24—31).

Sri Bhagavan said : O virtuous lady, in the period of Time called Śvāyambhuva Manwantara (the regime of Śvāyambhuva

Manu, the first Manu of this cycle), when you took your first birth, your name was Pr̥ṣni, and Vasudeva was then a Prajāpati (progenitor of mankind) called Sutapā. Both of you were free of faults. When Brahmā enjoined you to propagate the species, you practised austere penance controlling your senses. Exposing yourself to rain, storm, the scorching sun, cold, heat and other inclemencies of weather, you endured them all, and shook off all impurities of your mind by the practice of Prāṇāyāma (control of breath). You lived either on withered leaves or on mere atmospheric air. Possessing a tranquil mind, you thus offered Me worship actuated by the desire to obtain your wishes from Me. As you performed in this manner your austere and most difficult Tapas, twelve thousand celestial years passed. O virtuous lady, I was then highly pleased with you ; for in the course of your Tapas pursued with faith and devotion, you constantly contemplated Me at heart. The foremost dispenser of boons, I then revealed Myself before you in this very form to bestow on you the object of your desire. When I asked you to seek a boon, both of you expressed the desire for a son like Me. You had not till then tasted the vulgar enjoyments of the world. You possessed no issue. Therefore, deluded by My Māyā, you did not seek Mokṣa, or liberation from Me. Granting you the boon of a son like Me, I withdrew Myself from your presence. Realizing your object, you now began to indulge in worldly enjoyments. Failing to discover a soul who was similar to Me in

amiability of disposition, magnanimity and other qualities, I Myself was born as your son, and became known as Prśnigarbha in that birth. In the next birth you were known as Aditi and Vasudeva was known as Kaśyapa. I was then born as your son under the name of Upendra (Younger brother of Indra). The other name by which I was called at the time was Vāmana, because of my undersized stature. O virtuous lady, this is the third time I am born in the same form as your son. My words can never deviate from truth. I have revealed this Form to you in order to remind you of My previous incarnations. Had I not done so, had I appeared only in the human form, nobody would recognize that I am Myself incarnated in that Form. Now constantly contemplate Me as your son, and also as the Supreme Being. Bear-

ing this parental love towards Me and through constant meditation of Me, you will attain My Supreme state. (32—45).

Sri Sukadeva said : Having thus spoken, the glorious Hari became silent. Then, through His own Yogamāyā, He at once assumed the form of a common human child before the very eyes of His parents. Under the Lord's inspiration, Vasudeva then desired to go out of the room of confinement. That very moment Yogamāyā, who being the Lord's Energy is equally with Him birthless, took Her birth from Yaśodā, wife of Nanda. She deprived the sentinels of the prison as well as the citizens of their sense of awareness, and steeped them all in sleep. All the huge, strong doors of the prison were fastened by iron bars and chains and were securely locked. It was most difficult to get out of them. But on the approach of Vasudeva with Śri Kṛṣṇa in his arms all these doors opened of their own accord, just as gloom spontaneously disappears at the advent of the sun. The clouds thundering in suppressed tones were pouring gentle showers. Therefore the Divine Śeṣa spread his hoods over Bhagavān Śri Kṛṣṇa's head and followed Him protecting Him against the showers. Owing to frequent heavy rains during this period, the Jamuna was in flood. The strong, swift current of the river throwing rolling waves covered with foam made hundreds of fearful whirlpools. But just as the ocean allowed a passage in the past to Śri Rāma, Lord of Sītā, even so the Jamuna allowed a passage to Vasudeva





today. Arriving at Nanda's Vraja, Vasudeva found all the cowherds buried in sleep. Placing his son on the bed of Yaśodā, and picking up Yaśodā's new-born daughter lying beside her, he returned to the prison at Mathura. Arriving there, he placed the daughter on the bed of Devakī and putting the chains to his feet remained confined as before. And Yaśodā, Nanda's wife, had only a vague notion that she had given birth to a child; but she had no knowledge whether it was a son or a daughter. She was, on the one hand, thoroughly exhausted through fatigue, and, on the other, Yogamāyā had made her senseless through sleep. (46—53).

Chapter IV

ESCAPING FROM KAMSA'S HANDS INTO THE SKY, YOGAMĀYĀ MAKES HER PROPHESY

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, on Vasudeva's return, all the outer gates of the city and the doors of the prison got automatically closed as before. Then, hearing the cries of the new-born babe, the guards of the prison awoke from their sleep. They ran post-haste to Kaṁsa and informed him of the birth of a child to Devakī. Kaṁsa had been expecting this event with fear and anxiety. Hearing the news, he at once got up from his bed and rushed headlong with tottering steps towards the room of confinement. Thinking that this time it was his very 'Death' who had been born, he was greatly bewildered and ran with dishevelled hair. When Kaṁsa reached the prison in this plight, the virtuous Devakī full of pathos and grief said to her cousin, "O blessed brother, this child is as good as your daughter-in-law; you should not kill this

helpless female child. O dear cousin, you have already killed many children of mine as bright as balls of fire. But I do not blame you for that, for such was the will of Providence. Now, please leave this one daughter to me. Am I not your younger sister, helpless and deprived of all her sons? O dear brother, you are a mighty warrior; kindly let me have this last child, unfortunate as I am." (1—6).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parikṣit, hiding the child in her lap and crying like a most helpless creature, Devakī thus entreated her brother; but the remorseless Kaṁsa scolded her and snatched away the child from her hands. Seizing the new-born niece by her feet, he hurled her with violence against a slab of stone. The tenderness of his heart had really dried up in the fire of selfishness. But that younger

sister of Śrī Kṛṣṇa was no ordinary child; She was a goddess. Released from Kaṁsa's hands, She at once flew into the air and appeared in the sky with eight long arms holding the same number of weapons. She was adorned with celestial garlands, wearing apparel, sandal pigments and jewelled ornaments. She held the bow, the trident, the arrow, the shield, the sword, the conch, the discus and the club in Her eight hands. Siddhas, Chāraṇas, Gandharvas, Apsarās, Kinnaras and Nāgas, offering Her many presents, were singing Her praises. The goddess, addressing Kaṁsa, spoke thus: "O fool, what will you gain by killing me? The enemy of your previous birth has been born somewhere else to exterminate you. Do not in vain kill innocent children." Speaking thus to Kaṁsa, the goddess Yoganāyā went out of sight, and became known in different parts of the world under different names. (7—13).

On hearing what the goddess said, Kaṁsa was greatly surprised. He at once set Devakī and Vasudeva at liberty, and in humility said to them: "Alas, dear sister, O brother, I am an extremely wicked creature. Like a Rākṣasa killing his own progeny I have butchered many of your sons. The acute sorrow I now feel has really no limits. I am so wicked that there is not the least trace of compassion in me. I have renounced all my relations and friends. I do not know in which infernal regions I shall have to expiate my misdeeds. Like the murderer of a Brahman, I am really dead even though living. Not men alone, but even the Providence speaks untruth. Misguided by heavenly words, I have killed the babes of my sister. O what a sinful creature I am! O blessed brother and sister, please do not sorrow for your sons who are dead. They have reaped the fruits of their

own Karmas. All creatures are, indeed, subject to the control of Providence. That is why they cannot always live together in the same place. The pot made out of earth breaks, but this makes no difference in the earth itself. Even so the body repeatedly takes birth and dies, but the Ātma (soul) remains untouched by the modifications. Those who do not know this truth regard the material body as the self. This is the reverse of Knowledge, this is Ignorance. It is the cause of birth and death. Release from Samsāra, i.e., birth and death, is not possible till this ignorance is wholly eradicated. O blessed sister, though I have slain all your sons, please do not grieve for them; for every creature in this world inevitably reaps the fruit of his own actions. Owing to ignorance about the true nature of Self, so long as the Jīva feels "I am the killer, or I am killed," till then he being attached to the body is bound to be either the subject or object of wrong-doing. That is to say, he will be the cause of sorrow to others, and will suffer sorrow himself. Both of you are virtuous by nature, and possess affection for the distressed. Do you both forgive me my wickedness?" Saying this and flooding his face with tears, he took hold of the feet of Devakī and Vasudeva in order to propitiate them. Placing his faith in the words of Yoganāyā, he took off the chains which bound Devakī and Vasudeva and setting them at liberty began to show his affection for them. When Devakī saw that her brother was full of remorse and penitent, her anger was pacified. She forgot all his past tyranny, and Vasudeva, addressing Kaṁsa, smilingly said: "O blessed one, what you have said is exactly true. It is owing to ignorance that the Jīva identifies himself with the body. This is the cause of the notions of difference like

"Mine" and "Thine". And these notions of difference blind him with sorrow, joy, fear, hatred, greed, folly and pride. Then he fails to see that God, the common prompter of all, is Himself destroying one object through the instrumentality of another object." (14—27).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parikṣit, when Vasudeva and Devakī thus spoke with a sincere heart and free from anger, Kaṇṭsa taking leave of them retired to his palace. Next morning, he summoned all his advisers and repeated to them all that had been said by Yogamāyā. The ministers of Kaṇṭsa possessed no ripe sense. Being enemies of the gods, they naturally cherished a revengeful spirit towards the gods. On hearing what their master, Kaṇṭsa, said their anger against the gods became all the more acute. They said to Kaṇṭsa: "O chief of Bhojas, if such be the case we shall this very day kill all children, even those who are babes of either more or less than ten days, born in all cities, towns, villages, hamlets of cowherds and other places. What can the gods do by all these preparations? To speak the truth, they are all cowards. They always feel nervous when they hear the twang of your mighty bow. Only a short while ago when the war was on and you began to discharge arrows, the gods beatened on all sides, and anxious to escape with life, took to flight. In their wretched plight, some of them stood before you with joined palms, laying down their weapons; while others sought shelter with you unloosing the tuft of hair on their head and the hem of garment tucked to their waist-band. They said they were all possessed by fear and sought protection from you. Being a hero full of virtue and righteousness, you do not strike at those who have left their weapons behind, or whose chariots are broken, or

who are seized with terror. You do not strike the inattentive warrior, the warrior whose bow is broken, or who has taken to flight. The gods pose as heroes only when there is peace; they are given to bragging in places other than the battlefield. We have nothing to fear from them. As regards Viṣṇu, none knows where He lies in concealment. Śankara has pitched His tent somewhere in a forest. Of what account is Indra of poor strength, or Brahmā, who is wholly absorbed in his austerities and finds no time to attend to anything else? Nevertheless, it is our opinion that the gods should never be ignored; for weak though they are, they are by nature our enemies. Therefore, command us, your obedient servants, to pull them by the root. Just as a disease in the body, if ignored, strikes deep roots and becomes incurable; just as the senses, if not controlled, become extremely strong and unmanageable; even so the enemy, if ignored, grows in strength and becomes difficult to be shaken. Viṣṇu is, indeed, the root of the gods and He stays where Sanātana Dharma thrives. The roots of Sanātana Dharma lie in the Vedas, cows, Brahmans, austerities and in those sacrifices in which the fee is paid. Therefore, O king of Bhojas, we shall by all means slay Brahmans versed in the Vedas, also men who are engaged in austerities and sacrifices and cows which yield ghee, etc., for offering in sacrifices. The Brahmans, cows, Vedas, austerities, truthfulness, sense-control, mind-control, reverence, compassion, endurance and acts of sacrifice—these constitute the Body of Viṣṇu. He is the Supreme Lord of all the gods and the chief opponent of the Asuras. He, however, remains concealed in some cave. He is the origin and the cause of Mahādeva, Brahmā and all other gods. The way to get rid

of Him is to get rid of the Ṛṣis." (28—42).

Sri Sukadeva said: Parikṣit, Kāṁsa was an evil-minded man, but his ministers were more vicious than himself. In consultation with his counsellors, he came to the conclusion that the slaughter of Brahmans was the most expedient course. The Asura had been caught in the noose of the god of Death. He ordered the Rākṣasas, who were naturally fond of atrocious acts and were capable of putting on any guise, to harass and persecute the

saints. When they dispersed, Kāṁsa retired to his palace. Naturally constituted of Rajoguṇa, these Asuras now lost their sense of right and wrong due to the predominance of Tamoguṇa. Death was hovering over their heads. That is why they cherished hatred towards the saints. O Parikṣit, know it for certain, those who offend the great saints have their lease of life, prosperity, fame, virtue, happiness in this world and the next, worldly enjoyments and all other blessings brought to an abrupt end. (43—46).

Chapter V

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S BIRTH AT GOKULA

Sri Sukadeva said: Parikṣit, Nanda was a noble-minded, generous man. He was overwhelmed with joy at the birth of a son. He took a bath and thus purifying himself put on a beautiful dress and adorned himself with ornaments. Then, inviting Brahmans versed in the Vedas, he made them repeat auspicious Vedic texts and pronounce their blessings and performed all rites gone through at the birth of a child. He also duly worshipped the manes and other gods. He made a gift to Brahmans of two lakhs of well-adorned cows and seven heaps of sesamum seeds covered with golden cloth and many precious stones. Earth, the physical body, polluted articles, the womb, etc., the senses, the twice-born classes, wealth and the mind—these are purified respectively by passage of time, ablution, process of cleaning, purificatory rites, penance, sacrificial performances, charity and contentment. The soul (Ātmā) is purified through the knowledge of the nature of the soul as eternally pure. At that time Brahmans uttered their blessings, and Sūtas, Māgadhas

and Vandīs (different classes of bards and minstrels) repeated their praises and benedictive words; the musicians sang; drums and pipes were frequently sounded. All the thoroughfares of Vraja, fronts of houses and their interiors were swept well and moistened with fragrant water; the houses were decorated with flags and bunting of different colours, wreaths, cloths and festoons of tender sylvan shoots. Cows, oxen, calves and steers were besmeared with turmeric paste, oil and various colours and were decked with peacock feathers, garlands, cloths and chains of gold. Parikṣit, Gopas (cowherds) adorned with valuable cloths, ornaments, coats and turbans, and with various presents in their hands flocked to Nanda's house. (1—8).

When the Gopa women learnt that Yaśodā had given birth to a son, they were all filled with delight. Dressing themselves in beautiful costume, wearing ornaments and painting their eyes with collyrium they at once started for Yaśoda's house. Their faces were as charming as the lotus, and

the saffron pigment on their faces appeared as the pollen of the lotus. Their hips were heavy. Their breasts shook when they walked with hasty steps. Wearing ear-rings set with sparkling jewels and ornaments of gold about their neck and costly clothes of variegated colours, strewing their path with showers of flowers from their braid and with bangles on their wrists, the cowherd maids hastening to Nanda's house shone most charmingly with their rocking ear-rings and heaving bosoms with necklaces of pearls hanging over them. Pronouncing benedictions on the child saying, "Do you live for ever", and sprinkling those assembled with water mixed with oil and turmeric powder, they all sang auspicious songs in loud tones. (9—12).

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the supreme Lord of the Universe, and unbounded in every way. When He incarnated in the Vraja of Nanda, the occasion was marked by great festivity. Many wonderful and auspicious instruments of music were being played upon. The Gopas (cowherds) intoxicated with joy sportfully sprinkled one another with curds, clarified butter and water. They rubbed butter on one another's face and threw balls of butter at one another. The old Gopa, Nanda, was by nature liberal and wise. He presented the assembled Gopas with pieces of cloth, ornaments and cows. He duly honoured the Sūtas, Māgadhas, Vandis, people who make their living by dancing and music, and other men of art by gifts of their choice. His object in doing this was to propitiate Bhagavān Viṣṇu and ensure the welfare of his son. The blessed Rohinī also was greeted and honoured by Nanda on this occasion. Adorned with beautiful clothes, wreaths, necklaces and other ornaments she moved about like the lady of the house

welcoming and looking after the assembled women. Parīkṣit, from that very day the Vraja of Nanda reached the height of prosperity in every respect. Owing to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's presence, and the natural qualities of the place itself, Vraja became the pleasure-garden of Śrī Lakṣmī, the goddess of Wealth. (13—18).

Parīkṣit! a few days later, entrusting the care of Gokula to other Gopas, Nanda went to Mathura to pay his annual tribute to Kamsa. Learning that his friend and brother Nanda had come to Mathura, and had paid his tribute to the king, Vasudeva went to see him at his lodging. Observing Vasudeva, Nanda at once rose to his feet, as if life had returned to a dead body. Greatly delighted, and overcome with emotion, he embraced his beloved friend with both of his arms. Parīkṣit, Nanda treated Vasudeva with great honour and regard and enquired about his welfare. Vasudeva had been all the time thinking of his sons. When he was comfortably seated, he spoke to Nanda thus. (19—22).

Sri Vasudeva said: O brother, although you had had no issue so far, at this advanced age when you had given up all hope of getting an issue, you have fortunately been blessed with a child. What a pleasure that we have met today! It is a rare privilege to meet beloved friends. That is how the wheel of Saṃsāra moves. Meeting with you appears to me like a rebirth. Just as big rafts and small pieces of straw carried by the strong current of a river cannot remain together, even so friends and relatives, though they desire each other's company, cannot long remain together. For their respective Karmas take them along different paths. Is the great forest, known as Bṛhadvana (Gokula), where you dwell

now-a-days with your friends and relatives furnished with abundant water, grass, plants and herbs ? Is it favourable to cattle and free from disease ? O brother, my son with his mother (Rohinī) lives in your Vraja. Looked after by Yaśodā and yourself, he has perhaps begun to regard you both as his parents. Is he doing well ? Only such pursuit of Dharma, Artha and Kāma as brings happiness to friends and relatives is sanctioned by the scriptures. That which brings happiness only to one's own self, and causes misery to relatives and friends, is unwelcome. (23—28).

Nanda said: Alas, brother, Kaṁsa has put to death several of your sons born of Devakī. One small daughter, who was left,

has flown to heaven. There is no doubt that man's joy and sorrow are dependent on Fate. Unseen Fate is man's only refuge. He who realizes that Fate is the cause of all joy and sorrow never gets bewildered when going through either of these experiences. (29—30).

Sri Vasudeva said: O brother, you have already paid the king's dues and we have had the pleasure of meeting each other. Now, you should not stay here long; for Gokula is becoming a scene of ominous events these days. (31).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit ! when Vasudeva said this, Nanda and the other Gopas took leave of him, and riding carts drawn by pairs of bullocks started for Gokula. (32).

Chapter VI

PŪTANĀ'S DELIVERANCE

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, while on his way to Gokula, Nanda began to reason in his mind that Vasudeva could not have told a lie. He, therefore, felt apprehensive about something ominous coming to pass. Saying mentally to himself, 'God is our refuge, He will protect us', he sought refuge in Śrī Hari. There was a fearful demoness, Pūtanā by name, whose only occupation was to kill babes. Under instruction from Kaṁsa, she moved about in cities, villages, hamlets of cowherds and other places with the avowed intention of making short work of babes. These evil spirits can exercise their evil power only where people in the course of their daily duties fail to hear, chant or remember the Divine Name, glory and accounts of the Lord's sports, which drive away such evil spirits. Pūtanā had power to course through

the air and assume any form and go anywhere she pleased. This day coming near Nanda's Gokula, she transformed herself into a beautiful woman by her magical powers, and entered the precincts of Gokula. She made herself extremely charming to look at. Her braid was interwoven with jasmine flowers. She wore splendid clothes. When her ear-rings moved, their lustre made the locks of hair on her face all the more lustrous. Her hips and breasts were full, and the waist was slender. By her side glances accompanied with sweet smiles, she captivated the heart of the residents of Vraja. Seeing that beautiful woman walking through Gokula with a full-blown lotus in her hand, the Gopa women campared her to Goddess Lakṣmī Herself, come, as if, to see Her Lord. (1—6).

Pūtanā, as has been said before, was an evil spirit preying on children. In her search for infants, she now entered Nanda's house. There she observed Śrī Kṛṣṇa lying on His bed. O Parīkṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is death itself to the wicked. But just as fire remains hidden within a heap of ashes, even so He had now concealed His immeasurable glory. He is the Ātmā (Soul) of all that lives, both animate and inanimate. Knowing her at the very moment of her appearance to be the child-killing devil, the Lord lay quiet on His bed closing His eyes. Pūtanā placed Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was death to her, on her lap, just as a person may ignorantly take up a serpent who is lying asleep, mistaking it for a rope. Though possessed of



a cruel heart, like a sharp sword within a smooth velvety sheath, Pūtanā looked such an excellent lady and behaved herself in such a charming fashion that both the mothers, Yaśodā and Rohinī, were overpowered by her glamour, and kept on looking without either questioning or preventing her. Placing Śrī Kṛṣṇa on her

lap, the demoness now suckled Him at her breast, which was besmeared with the deadliest and most indigestible poison. Full of indignation and anger, the glorious Lord pressed her breast very hard with both of His hands and began to suck, drawing her very life along with the milk. (He Himself sucked her milk, whereas His companion Anger sucked her life.) All her vital parts began to give way one after another. Shouting wildly—"Enough, enough you have drunk, now release your hold," she wailed aloud, perspiring all over, tossing her hands and feet in convulsions, her eyes open wide and the eye-balls overturned inside their sockets. Her screams were so loud, deep and violent that they shook the earth with the mountains, and the heavens with all the planets; the seven nether worlds and the cardinal points echoed and re-echoed the sound; many people fell flat on the ground apprehending a stroke of lightning. O Parīkṣit, the pain in Pūtanā's breast was so acute that she could no longer conceal her identity as a demoness. Her life went out, her mouth was widely open, her hair was dishevelled and the arms and legs were stretched. Just as the Asura Vṛtra fell struck with Indra's thunderbolt, even so she fell in the open yard outside in her real form as a demoness. (7—13).

O Parīkṣit, even in its fall Pūtanā's body reduced to pulp all trees over a distance of twelve miles; it was really a most astounding sight. Her jaws contained teeth as long and terrible as ploughshares, her nostrils were like mountain caves, her breasts resembled stones fallen in landslip, her copper-coloured hair was spread in terrible disorder. Her eyes were deep like dark wells, hips were formidable like the steep banks of rivers; her arms, thighs and

feet were like bridges over rivers and her belly looked like a dried pool. Seeing this fearful form of Pūtanā all Gopas and cowherd maids were filled with consternation. Her shrieks had already shattered their hearts, ears and heads. Seeing that the child Śrī Kṛṣṇa was fearlessly playing on her bosom, the Gopa women quickly came up in their bewilderment and picked Him up from her breast. Along with Yaśodā and Rohinī, the Gopis performed certain propitiatory rites for the child's protection against evils by waving round Him the tail of the cow, and other observances. They bathed the child in the urine of the cow, and sprinkled over Him the dust of the cow's feet. Touching cowdung at twelve points of His body and pronouncing twelve Names of the Deity, they summoned divine aid for His protection. The Gopis then performed Āchamana by sipping a little water, and pronouncing eleven seed-words made Nyāsa, that is, assigned the various parts of the body and the hands to different deities with prayers and corresponding gesticulations, and did the same on the body of the child. (14-21).

They said—"May God, the Unborn, protect your feet, may Mañimān shield your knees, may Yajña (the Deity presiding over sacrifices) guard your thighs, Achyuta your waist, Hayagrīva your abdomen, Keśava your heart, Iśa your bosom, the Sun-god your neck, Viṣṇu your arms, Urukrama your mouth and Iṣwara your head. May the Bearer of the discus (Chakra) protect you on the front; may the Bearer of the club, Hari, protect your back; may the Slayer of Madhu, armed with the bow, and Ajana, armed with the sword, defend your right and left; may Urugāya, armed with the conch, defend you at the four corners; may Upendra mounted on Garuda defend

you on high; may the Lord bearing the plough defend you on the ground; and may the Lord, the Supreme Person, protect you on all sides. May Hṛṣikeśa protect your senses and Nārāyaṇa your vital breaths. May the Lord of Śweta-Dwīpa protect your heart and the Lord of Yoga your mind. May Pṛśnigarbha protect your understanding, and Paramātmā your Ahankāra or ego. May Govinda protect you while you are playing, and Madhava while you are asleep. May Vaikuṇṭha guard you while you are walking, and the Lord of Lakṣmī shield you while you are sitting; and may the terror of all evil spirits, the Enjoyer of Yajñas, protect you while you are dining. Dākinīs, Rākṣasīs, Kūṣmāṇḍas and other spirits troublesome to children; Bhūtas, Pretas, Piśāchas, Yakkas Rākṣasas and Vināyakas, and Koṭarā, Revatī, Jyeṣṭhā, Pūtanā, Mātṛkā, etc.; diseases like insanity and epilepsy which prey upon the body, senses and the vital breaths; portents seen in dreams, and evil spirits inimical to old and young people—may all these disappear terrified at the Names of Viṣṇu." (22—29).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit! bound by ties of affection, the Gopis thus uttered their charms for the protection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Then Mother Yaśodā suckled Him and laid Him on His bed. In the meanwhile Nanda and his associate Gopas returned to Vraja from Mathura. They were astounded at the sight of the huge body of Pūtanā. They said to themselves—"Certainly, this is a wonder. Either some Ṛṣi has incarnated in the person of Vasudeva, or this Vasudeva must have been a master of Yoga in his previous birth. We see the portents foretold by him." The people of Vraja hacked the body of Pūtanā to pieces, and taking it to some distance piecemeal burnt it with fuel. The smoke arising from the burning body

emitted the sweet fragrance of aloe wood. This happened because Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa had sucked at her breast, which at once divested her of all sins. O Parīkṣit, you know Pūtanā was a demoness. Her occupation was to murder children and suck their blood. She had given her breast to Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the intention of killing Him and yet she attained a state which is reserved only for saints and devotees. What wonder, then, that persons who offer to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa with faith and devotion, and with the intensity of affection of the mother, all that they hold dear and all that is dear to the Lord Himself, should attain the highest spiritual state ! The lotus feet of the Lord are worshipped even by gods like Brahmā and Śāṅkara, who are worshipped by the whole world. They are the jewel firmly set in the heart of His devotees. With those divine feet the Lord pressed Pūtanā's body while sucking her breast. Thus, even though a demoness, she was granted the high spiritual state of the Lord's mother. What, then, need be said of the cows and mothers, whose milk the Lord sucked with affection and pleasure ! O Parīkṣit ! the glorious Lord, son of Devakī,

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is the dispenser of Mokṣa and all other blessings. He sucked to His satisfaction the milk of the Gopīs and the cows of Vraja, which flowed spontaneously through maternal affection for Him. Those cows and Gopīs constantly looked upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their own son ; they were never subject to Sarpaśāra which is caused by Ignorance, for they were all freed from ignorance. (30-40).

O Parīkṣit ! smelling the fragrance of the smoke issuing from the burning dead body, the people of Vraja who had gone to Mathura with Nanda greatly wondered what it was. They entered Vraja saying, "Where does this sweet smell come from ?" There they were all astonished to hear the account given by the Gopas of Pūtanā's arrival, her death and the babe Śrī Kṛṣṇa's escape from death. O Parīkṣit, the noble-minded Nanda took up the child in his arms thinking Him to have returned from the jaws of death, smelled Him again and again on the crown and was transported with joy. 'Deliverance of Pūtanā' is a wonderful story of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's infantile sports. He who listens to this story with faith and devotion, attains intense love and devotion for Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (41-44).

Chapter VII

OVERTURNING OF THE CART AND DELIVERANCE OF TRĀÑĀVARTA

King Parikshit said : O master ! the all-powerful Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, assuming many Avatāra forms, does many deeds delightful to hear. The stories of these deeds captivate my mind. The mere hearing of them drives away distaste for stories of divine sports and the thirst for various forms of worldly enjoyment. The heart gets purified soon. Devotion to the Lord's feet, and friendship with, and love for, His devotees are gained. If you find me

qualified to hear them, please relate these sports of the Lord to me. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when He manifested Himself as a human being, behaved exactly like a human being. The deeds of the Lord were, indeed, marvellous. Be pleased to narrate to me in detail other sports of the Lord as a human child. (1-3).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit, on a certain day the festival of the child's first turning on His bed was being held. It

chanced to be a day when the very star of His day of birth was ascendant. Ladies gathered in crowds for the occasion; music, vocal as well as instrumental, was going on. Brahmans, uttering sacred Mantras, were giving an auspicious bath to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Darling of Nanda. The virtuous Yaśodā was busy in connection with these functions. She showed every honour to Brahmans, gave them victuals, clothes, garlands, cows and whatever else they asked for. After completion of the bath and utterance of the propitiatory Mantras, Yaśodā finding that her darling closed His eyes in sleep, gently put Him to bed. A little while after, the eyes of her blue-coloured darling opened. He began to cry for the mother's milk. With her mind absorbed in entertaining her guests, who had gathered for the festivity, the liberal-minded Yaśodā did not at all hear Śrī Kṛṣṇa crying. The child then began to kick up His little feet. He had been put to bed under a cart. His little feet were as soft and tender as young sprouts; but hit by those very feet the huge cart overturned and broke into pieces all the earthenware and other vessels full of milk, curds and other valuable milk products; the wheels and axle of the cart were thrown out of gear, and the yoke was shattered. Yaśodā, Rohinī and the other women of Vraja, who had assembled there for the festive occasion, as well as Nanda and the other Gopas, were all perplexed at the wonderful sight. They said to themselves, "How did this cart capsized?" Disputing over the cause of this incident, they could come to no conclusion. Boys who were playing there told the Gopas and Gopis that the child kṛṣṇa, while crying, had overturned it by His Kicks. But the Gopas did not believe it, taking it to be

mere prattle of children. This was quite natural for them, for they knew nothing about the unlimited strength of the child. (4—10).

Yaśodā suspected that it was the work of some evil spirit. Taking up her darling, who was crying, she got Brahmans to repeat propitiatory hymns from the Vedas. She then began to suckle her child. Sturdy Gopas took hold of the overturned cart, put in order its broken and relaxed parts and restored it to its original position placing vessels over it as before. Brahmans poured offerings into the fire and worshipped God with curds, unbroken rice, blades of Kuśa grass and water. The benedictions of Brahmans who are truthful by nature, who never find fault with the virtues of another, who are untouched by mendacity, hypocrisy, envy, cruelty and pride, never prove ineffectual. With this faith Nanda took up his child and bathed Him with water made efficacious with sacred herbs and the chanting of Mantras by the best of Brahmans from the Rk, Sāma and Yajur Vedas. He made the Brahmans repeat benedictory hymns and poured offerings into the fire and feasted the Brahmans with rich and delicious food. For the welfare of his son, he made gifts to Brahmans of cows of very good quality, adorned with clothes, garlands and gold chains. The Brahmans, well-versed in Mantras, pronounced appropriate benedictions on the child. O Parikṣit, it is certain that benedictions uttered by Brahmans who possess knowledge of the Vedas and are devoted to Yoga never go in vain. (11—17).

On a certain day, the virtuous Yaśodā was fondling the child on her lap. Suddenly Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared to her as heavy as a rock. She felt herself unable to bear the

weight of the child. Oppressed with the burden, she set the child on the ground and was filled with wonder. She contemplated the Supreme Person and went about her household duties. (18-19).

There was a demon, Trṇāvarta by name, who was a personal attendant of Kṛṣṇa. Directed by his master, he came in the form of a whirlwind and carried away the child Śrī Kṛṣṇa seated on the ground. With clouds of dust, he covered the whole of Vraja, deprived men of their sight, and by his most terrible roars shook all the cardinal points and corners of the earth. For about an hour the whole of Vraja was enveloped in dust and darkness. Looking out for Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the spot where she had placed Him, Yaśodā failed to find Him there. Assailed with the sand and dust raised by Trṇāvarta, people got confused and perplexed; nobody saw himself or others. Missing her child in that violent blast and shower of dust, the poor mother was very much grieved; and the thought of the child made her so miserable that she fell on the ground like a cow that had lost its calf. When the violent wind and rain of dust subsided, the Gopa women heard the cries of Yaśodā and immediately ran to her. Failing to find Nanda's darling, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the very personification of Beauty in blue colour, they were greatly pained at heart. Flooding their faces with tears, they all began to wail loudly for Him. (20—25).

Assuming the form of a whirlwind, when Trṇāvarta carried Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa up in the sky and reached a high point, he felt the burden of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be unbearable and found his speed suddenly arrested. He was unable to proceed further. The Lord had grown heavier than Trṇā-

varta, who felt Him to be as heavy as a rock. The demon tried to disengage himself and drop the child, but failed to do so, because the wonderful child had tightly seized him by the throat. He was rendered motionless by the pressure at the throat and his eyes were forced out of their sockets. The demon muttering low sounds fell dead on the plain of Vraja with Śrī Kṛṣṇa still hanging at his neck. The women who had been weeping and wailing for Śrī Kṛṣṇa there in a body saw the dreadful demon fall from the sky on a rock which shattered all his limbs to pieces, even as the arrow of Rudra tore Tripurāsura asunder. The Gopis were all astounded at the sight. They quickly picked up Śrī Kṛṣṇa from the bosom of the demon and brought Him back to His mother. The child escaped unscathed from the very jaws of death. Though carried away through the sky by the Asura, Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned unhurt. Yaśodā and the Gopis as well as Nanda and all cowherds were immensely delighted at this miraculous escape of the child. They said, "O wonder of wonders, the child was thrown into the jaws of death by the Rākṣas; but He has returned unscathed, whereas the cruel and wicked creature has been extirpated by his own sin. It is really true that the virtuous are saved from fear by their own equable temperament. What great austerities, what worship of Śrī Hari, what charity, sacrifices, works of public utility such as construction of wells, ponds, etc., and what altruism have we practised by virtue of which our lost child has fortunately come back to us, bringing delight to His kinsmen and friends?" Observing these wonderful incidents frequently occurring at Bṛhadvana, the old Gopa Nanda was greatly astonished. He realized the truth of the warnings of Vasudeva again and again. (26—33).

On another day, the blessed Yaśodā took



her Darling on her lap and began to suckle Him. She was so much overwhelmed with affection at the time that milk began to flow from her breasts automatically. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was almost satisfied with the draught of milk, and the mother was caressing the child and kissing His sweet, smiling face. Just at that moment the child yawned. When He opened His mouth, Yaśodā saw that the sky, the space between the earth and sky, zodiacal constellations, the cardinal points, the sun, the moon, fire, air, oceans, continents, mountains, rivers, forests, and all beings in the Universe, animate and inanimate, were present there. O Parikṣit! suddenly seeing the entire Universe in the mouth of her own son, Yaśodā shuddered. She closed her eyes, and remained drowned in astonishment. (34—37).

Chapter VIII

NAMING CEREMONY AND SPORTS OF CHILDHOOD

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, Gargāchārya was the family priest of the Yadus. He was a man devoted to austerities and penance. At the request of Vasudeva, he came to Nanda's Gokula one day. Extremely pleased to see him, Nanda rose from his seat and received him with joined palms, bowed to him and worshipped him with the idea that God Himself was present before him in that form. When Gargachārya had taken a comfortable seat and partaken of his hospitality, Nanda pleased the sage with his sweet and respectful words. He said: "O venerable master, you are one who has reached the end of all desires. You have neither any sense of want nor require any worldly object. Then, what service may I render to you? Sages like you visit householders like us only for our supreme good.

We are so much engrossed with our household affairs, so much steeped in the world, that we cannot even go to you. Except conferring good on us, you have no other motive in coming to us. O master! the science of Astrology, the chief means of knowing what is beyond the range of the senses, by which man knows the past as well as what lies buried in the womb of future, has been propounded by you. You are foremost among the knowers of Brahma. Be pleased to perform the naming ceremony and other connected ceremonies in respect of these two boys of mine. You may say that this should be done by my family preceptor. But you know, Sir, that the Brahman is by birth the preceptor of men." (1—6).

Sri Gargachārya said: "Nanda, you know well that I am known throughout the

world as the priest of Yadus. If I conduct the naming ceremony of your son, people will suspect him to be Devaki's son. Karṣa's intentions are very evil, he thinks of nothing but evil. Ever since he heard from Devaki's daughter that his destroyer had been born elsewhere, he has been thinking that Devaki's eighth child could not be a female. There is intimate friendship between you and Vasudeva. Now, if I perform the purificatory rite in respect of your son and Karṣa kills him suspecting him to be Devaki's son, I shall be guilty of a very great crime." (7—9).

Sri Nanda said : O Āchārya, please perform quietly and privately only the naming ceremony of the boys, compulsory as it is for all boys of the twice-born classes, through utterance of benedictory Mantras. To say nothing of others, even my own people would know nothing about this. (10).

Sri Sukadeva said : This was Gargāchārya's own plan. When Nanda made the proposal, the sage secretly performed the naming ceremony in respect of the two boys in a quiet, unfrequented place. (11).

Sri Gargacharya said : This is Rohiṇī's son, therefore he will be called Raubhiṇeya. He will intensely delight his relatives and friends by his qualities, therefore his second name will be 'Rāma'. On account of his infinite strength, he will be called by the name of 'Bala'. He will make no distinction between you and the Yādavas and compose all differences among people; therefore he will be known by the name of 'Sankarṣaṇa'. As for this dark-complexioned child, he assumes the human form in every Yuga (age). In three previous Yugas, he appeared on earth assuming the white, red and yellow colours. This time he has assumed a dark complexion, therefore his name will

be Kṛṣṇa. O Nanda, this child of yours was once born as Vasudeva's child. People who know this secret, therefore, call him Śrī Vāsudeva. This son of yours has many other names and many other forms. All his excellent virtues and deeds are marked and remembered through these names. I know these names, but the common people do not. He will bring you supreme good. He will bring extreme delight to all Gopas and cows. With his help you will easily triumph over all difficulties. O Lord of Vraja, in a previous Yuga, when the earth was unprotected by any king and anarchy was reigning throughout the land, when robbers were depriving people of their wealth and property, this child of yours protected the virtuous, who strengthened by him put down the wicked people. O Nanda, people who offer their love to this dark-complexioned child are, indeed, very fortunate. Just as Asuras cannot vanquish the Devas, who live under the protection of Viṣṇu, even so the lovers of this child cannot be conquered by any enemy, internal or external. O Nanda, from whatever point of view you may examine this child—excellent qualities, wealth, beauty, fame, prowess, etc.,—he is equal only to Lord Nārāyaṇa. Please look after him with utmost care and attention." Thus advising and instructing Nanda, Śrī Gargāchārya returned to his hermitage. His reading of the child's past and future extremely delighted Nanda, who considered all his desires to have been fulfilled and felt himself to be a blessed man from every point of view. (12—20).

Parikṣit, in a short time Rāma and Kṛṣṇa began to creep on all fours and sportfully moved about in all Vraja. When the two children dragged their little feet through the mud of Vraja, the ornaments at

their feet and waist made tinkling sounds which delighted and charmed them. They would sometimes follow unknown passers-by and then, as if startled and frightened, would return in haste to mothers Rohinī and Yaśodā. With bosoms overflowing with the milk of affection their mothers would with both arms embrace their sons, who looked charmingly beautiful with their limbs anointed with mire, and give them suck. While sucking, they would now and then look at their mothers with bright faces and winning smiles exhibiting their teeth, which would transport the mothers to a heaven of delight. When Rāma and Kṛṣṇa grew a little older, they engaged themselves in such childish sports in Vraja outside their home that the Gopīs would remain rooted to their places looking at them. They would catch hold of the tails of calves, which would run this way and that and drag them behind. The

gäge the calves from the grasp of the children and would feel themselves thoroughly merged in supreme delight. Kṛṣṇa and His elder brother were both very active and past masters in playing childish pranks. They would sometimes run after horned animals like the deer and cow, would attempt to catch blazing fire, would go to hold animals like the dog possessing sharp teeth, would take up swords unawares, would overturn vessels storing water and roll in mud and splash the water. In attempting to catch birds they would quietly proceed and take sudden jumps; and when the birds flew away, they would run on their knees after the shadows of birds. They were quite indifferent to thorns and thorny grass. The mothers used to forbid them, but without any effect. They could be controlled only when they were presented with beautiful dolls. Under the circumstance, the mothers could not properly attend to their household duties. Their mind swung between thoughts of nursing and feeding the children and the anxiety for their protection from danger. (21—25).

O Parīkṣit, people in Gokula had lost all consciousness of the passage of time. In a short time, the darlings of Yaśodā and Rohinī began to walk straight without resting on their knees. O king ! Kṛṣṇa, the apple of eyes of the inhabitants of Vraja, was God Himself. He was the repository of all Beauty and all Sweetness. He went out with Rāma to play in Vraja with boys of His age and engaged Himself in various sports, bringing joy to the fortunate women of Vraja. His pranks were quite inimitable. To the Gopīs they appeared extremely sweet, extremely charming. One day they all gathered and came in a body to Nanda's house to report to Yaśodā the mischievous deeds of the child, whom they all loved from the core



Gopis leaving their household duties would go on looking at these pranks and heartily laugh over them. They would run to disen-

of their heart. "O mother, this Kanhaiyā (Krṣṇa) of yours has become extremely



naughty. He untethers the calves before it is milking time; and if we threaten him, he breaks out into loud laughter. Not only that, he steals and eats all our sweet milk and curds. He is a master in the art of stealing. Nothing can be saved from him. It would not matter much if he only ate himself; but what is more objectionable, he would divide the milk and curd among monkeys, and when they had eaten to their heart's content, would break the vessels. If he finds nothing in the house worth eating, he gets angry with the inmates of the house and says, 'I am the master of the house, where have you concealed all my things?' When outwitted in these matters, he teases our children and runs away setting them a-crying. If we keep our pots of milk and curds hanging from the roof, beyond the reach of his small hands, he improvises many novel ways to get at them. Here he piles one stool upon another, there gets upon the large wooden

mortar, or places a stool upon the mortar. Now and then, he even stands on the shoulders of his associates. When all these devices fail, he strikes the pot from below and makes holes in them so dexterously that nobody may come to know it. Besides, he has a perfect knowledge of the contents of every pot. And, O mother, when we



conceal our things in a dark room, he discovers everything through the lustre of the jewels with which you have loaded him. But, O mother, please do not on that account remove the jewels from his person; for the very lustre of his body is sufficient to light up everything for him. He is so smart that he keeps himself informed of the whereabouts of every person and carries on his raids when our mind and heart are absorbed in household duties. O mother, you are a simple and artless woman; you have no knowledge of his mischievous pranks. He is so bold and impudent that He goes to the length of committing nuisance in our neat and tidy houses. Look at this imp! Having done all these mischiefs,

and employed all expedients of theft, he stands here before you like a mere doll. Praises to you, O innocent child, the very embodiment of virtue!" The Gopis made these complaints and went on watching His charming face and terrified eyes. From their gestures Yaśoda could easily read their mind and would feel herself overwhelmed with joy and affection. Full of smiles she could not even accuse her boy, far less could she bring herself to rebuke Him. (26-31).

One day, Balarāma and other cowherd boys were playing with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They all complained to Yaśoda—"O mother, Kṛṣṇa has eaten earth." Yaśodā got afraid that this might affect Śrī Kṛṣṇa's health. She at once caught the child by the hand. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's plight at that moment was worthy of the gods to see. His eyes began to roll through excessive fear. Yaśodā rebuked Him, saying—"O you naughty boy! why have you eaten earth and that, too, stealthily? Not boys who are opposed to you, but these boys, who are your friends, tell me this and your brother Rāma confirms it." (32-34).

Bhagavan Sri Krishna said: "O mother, I did not eat earth; they are all telling a lie. If you believe they are true, why, here is my mouth before you; you can see it for yourself." Yaśodā agreed and asked Him to open His mouth, and Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa did as His mother bade Him to do. O Parikṣit! Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is God Himself, possessed of unlimited powers; He had assumed the form of a human child out of mere sport. Yaśodā observed that the entire Universe consisting of all animate and inanimate beings was present within His mouth. Ether (Ākāśa) and the cardinal points; the earth with its mountains, continents and oceans; the whole planetary system with the subtle air, the subtle fire, the

moon and the stars; water, gross fire, gross air and space between the earth and other planets; the Devas who are born of the ego, the mind, the senses, the other subtle elements and the three Guṇas—all these she noticed in the Child's mouth. O Parikṣit, what more shall I enumerate—the Jīva, Time, Primordial Matter, Karma and its seeds, and this world produced through their combination, including Vraja and even herself, Yaśodā saw within the little open mouth of her child, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She was



filled with doubt. She began to reflect—"Is this a dream, or a strange vision of God's illusion? Is my mind functioning normally, or something has gone wrong with it? Or, does my child possess any inborn Yogic powers?" As she was reflecting thus, suddenly the light dawned on her. She said: "Obeisance to the Supreme Lord, who cannot be distinctly and easily comprehended by the mind, the intellect or speech, nor can be approached through works; on whom the

whole Universe rests, by whom it is inspired and to whose existence it owes its appearance; nay, whose real nature is altogether incogitable. I take shelter under Him whose Maya produces the wrong notions, such as "Here am I; this is my husband, this is my son; I am the devoted queen and mistress of all the wealth of the Lord of Vraja; these Gopas, Gopis and all the wealth of cattle are mine." Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw that the mother had grasped the truth about Him. If this realization continued, He thought, He would no more be able to enjoy her motherly affection. The Lord, therefore, cast the spell of His Yogamāyā upon her and awakened her natural affection for Him. In a moment Yaśodā lost her memory of the vision and placed her son on her lap with a heart overflowing with intense affection as before. He whose glories are incessantly sung by the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Sāṅkhyā and Yoga scriptures and devotees in general, Him, the Supreme Lord of the Universe, Yaśodā looked upon as her son. (35—45).

King Parikṣit said: O sage, what was the meritorious work done by Nanda ? What were the austerities done by the most fortunate Yaśodā who had the unique privilege of suckling the Supreme Lord at her breast ? The childish sports which Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa played with cowherd boys, concealing His glory and greatness as the Supreme Lord, were so pure that they

drive away the sins of those who even hear them, or sing about them. Men of wisdom, whose vision of the past, present and future is unobstructed, sing them even today. What is the reason that His own parents, Devakī and Vasudeva, were denied the privilege of seeing these sports, whereas Nanda and Yaśodā enjoyed them to their heart's content ? (46-47).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, in his former existence, Nanda was one of the eight Vasus, Droṇa by name, whose wife's name was Dharā. Intent upon carrying out the behests of Brahmā, they said to him : 'O Lord ! when we are born in the world, may we possess exclusive devotion and love to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord of the Universe,—devotion by means of which man easily gets over the evils of the world.' Brahmā replied : 'Let it be so'. That very Droṇa of good name, a devotee wholly absorbed in God, was born in Vraja and assumed the name of Nanda. And Dharā, his wife, appeared as Yaśodā. O Parikṣit, the Supreme Lord incarnated as their son in this birth; therefore the devotion and love which Nanda and Yaśodā bore towards Him was more intense and devout than that of other Gopas and Gopis. In order to make the words of Brahmā true, the omnipresent Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa together with Rāma dwelt in Vraja and brought joy to the inhabitants of Vraja by His sportful activities. (48—52).

Chapter IX

ŚRĪ KṛṣṇA GETS BOUND TO THE HUSKING-STAND

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit ! one day directing the maid-servants to do some other work, Yaśodā, Nanda's wife, began to churn the curd herself to make butter for her darling. As she churned the curd, she recollect-

ed the childish sports of the Lord which I have so far described to you and sang songs relating to them. Clad in silk cloth fastened with a zone round her big waist, with her shaking breasts that overflowed from affec-

tion for her son, with ear-rings and bangles set in motion and her arms tired with pulling the rope to and fro, the face bedewed with drops of sweat and jasmine flowers dropping from her braid, she went on churning. While the mother was thus engaged, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa came up to her for a suck. Increasing the delight of her heart, He took hold of the churning rod and stopped her churning. The mother then



took up Śrī Kṛṣṇa on her lap and suckled her darling from her breasts overflowing through affection, looking all the while into His joyous face full of smiles. Just then her attention being drawn to the milk on the fire, which was boiling over, she put Him down when He was yet unsatisfied, and went away in haste to remove the pot. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was angered at this, His ruddy lips began to quiver. Biting the lips with His teeth, He took up a piece of stone and with one stroke smashed the pot of curd. Shedding false tears, He went to another room and began to eat butter stealthily all by Himself. (1-6).

Taking down the pot of boiled milk, Yaśodā returned to the churning room.



There she found the pot of curd broken to pieces. She immediately guessed it was her son's doing; but when she found the culprit himself missing, she could hardly restrain her laughter. Looking round for Him she



beheld Śrī Kṛṣṇa standing on an overturned husking-stand and freely feeding the monkeys with butter placed on a swinging net. As if afraid of detection, He was looking hither and thither. But Yaśodā gently approached Him from behind. Seeing her near Him with a cane in hand, Śrī Kṛṣṇa got down in haste from the husking-stand and ran, as if overwhelmed with fear. O Parikṣit, He in whom the greatest of Yogīs cannot enter by making their minds pure and subtle through performance of hard penances and austerities, far less realize in some personal relation,—to catch and chastise that Supreme Lord of Creation, Yaśodā began to pursue Him. Going after

moment. Being a guilty child, He was shedding profuse tears. As He rubbed His eyes with His hand, the collyrium spread all over His face. Owing to fear of a sound thrashing from the mother, He was looking up with bewildered eyes. Seeing the child thoroughly frightened, the loving mother threw away the cane and decided to tie Him with a cord; for she thought that without some form of chastisement the child would get absolutely out of control. Parikṣit, to tell you the truth, Yaśodā was ignorant of the power and glory of her little child. For, how else could she think of tying Him to the husking-stand;—He, the Supreme Lord of the Universe, whom she imagined to be her child because He assumed the human form; He, in whom there is no distinction of inside and outside, no beginning and no end; who existed before creation, and will exist after the creation is dissolved; who is inside the universe as well as outside it; what more, who is the universe itself, and who is also the Unmanifest, Absolute Being, beyond the senses? And she actually tied Him to the husking-stand with a piece of cord, as if He was a common human child! But when the mother began to bind her naughty child, the cord was found to be short by two inches. She brought another piece of cord and joined it to the original one. When this also proved short, she added another piece, and so on. But with all the pieces she added, the rope was still short by two inches. Yaśodā put together all the pieces of cord in her house, and yet she failed to bind Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The Gopa women laughed at her, and Yaśodā also laughed and stood amazed. But the Lord observed that His mother was thoroughly exhausted, her body was bathed in sweat, and wreaths of flowers dropped from her loosened braid, and taking pity on her allowed Himself to be



Him, she was impeded in her gait by the weight of her spacious and full hips. Her braid was loosened on account of her hasty steps. As she proceeded, flowers dropped behind her from her braid. The mother possessing a beautiful waist, however, at last overtook Him. Taking hold of Him by the hand, she began to threat n Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked a beautiful picture at that

The Kalyana-Kalpatalu



Binding the Unbound



Seeking to be Suckled

bound. O Parīkṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme and Absolute Lord. Brahmā, Indra and other gods and the entire universe is under His sway. And yet allowing Himself to be thus bound by a cord, He showed to the world how He placed Himself under the control of His devotees. To tell you the truth, by allowing Himself to be tied in this manner the Lord, who is the bestower of Mokṣa (liberation from bondage), showed such grace to His mother, Yaśodā, the wife of Nanda, as was never shown even to His own son Brahmā, His very soul Śāṅkara or His other Self Śrī Lakṣmī Herself. The realization of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the dar-

ling of Yaśodā, is not so easy to other creatures as it is to those who are full of devotion; even men of knowledge, who are the very selves of God, do not enjoy this privilege. (7-21).

After this Yaśodā was engrossed in her household duties and the embodiment of Beauty, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, thought of liberating the two Arjuna trees, who had been sons of Kubera in their previous life, Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva by name. Possessed of immense wealth, beauty and splendour, they had been, on account of their pride, cursed by Devarṣi Nārada and turned into trees. (22-23).

Chapter X

DELIVERANCE OF YAMALĀRJUNA

King Parīkṣit said: O revered sage, kindly tell me why Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva were subjected to a curse. Of what reproachful conduct were they guilty, which roused the anger of even the most peaceful divine sage Nārada? (1).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parīkṣit, Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva were, on the one hand, the pet sons of Kubera, the Lord of wealth, and on the other, they began to be counted as attendants of Rudra. This altogether turned their heads. The haughty violate Dharma as a matter of course. Intoxicated with pride, they resided on the bank of the Mandakīnī in a beautiful garden on the Kailāsa. One day they got drunk with the liquor called Vāruṇī. Their eyes rolling under its influence, and surrounded by women, who were singing and dancing, they strolled in the garden, which was in full blossom. The Ganges was at the place full of lotuses, which had all opened their petals. They entered the river with all their women and began

to sport with those youthful females, even as elephants sport with she-elephants. O Parīkṣit, by chance Devarṣi Nārada happened to pass that way. From the very sight before him the Divine sage perceived that the two young celestials were intoxicated. Seeing the Devarṣi, the damsels felt ashamed at their nudity, and being afraid of a curse, at once put on their clothes. But the two Yakṣas did not care to do so. The Devarṣi observed that though sons of a celestial chief, they were blind through arrogance of wealth and were intoxicated with wine; therefore, cursing them as a mark of his favour, he spoke as follows. (2-7).

Devarṣi Narada said: Men who give themselves up to fascinating pleasures, nothing is so powerful to bring about the loss of their good sense as pride of wealth. Activities such as the practice of cruelty, in which Rajoguṇa is predominant, and pride of birth and learning, etc. also produce loss of good sense; but along with pride of wealth find place women, gambling and

wine. Blinded by pride of wealth and power, cruel men devoid of self-control regard this body as proof against decay and destruction, and kill animals possessed of bodies like their own. What is the final end of this body, which is styled either as a 'god of earth' (Brahman) or a 'god of men' (king)? It will decompose and be eaten by worms if it is buried, will be transformed into ordure if birds and animals eat it, and will be reduced to a heap of ashes if it is burnt on a pyre. What interest does one expect to gain by killing other creatures for the sake of this body? He will only be condemned to hell as the result of this cruelty. To whom really does this body belong? To him who gives it food or to the father and mother who bring it forth, or to the mother's father? To him who seizes it by force and exacts work from it, or to one who purchases it? To the fire which will reduce it to ashes, or to the dog and jackal which are waiting to devour it by tearing it to pieces? A most ordinary thing, emanating from Prakṛti and vanishing into it, who else than a fool would regard this body as his own self, and hurt other creatures, or kill them, for its sake? To the wicked man blinded with pride of wealth, poverty is the best remedy; for the man in poverty distinctly sees that other creatures are like himself liable to privation and suffering. A person who has run a thorn into his foot would not have another person undergo the same pain; for he realizes by experience how much pain is suffered when a thorn enters the foot. But he who has no experience of running a thorn cannot sympathize with sufferers who actually run it. A poor man remains free from self-conceit and pride of all forms. Nay, the hardships he has to undergo in life by the will of Providence serve as

austerities to him. One who has to earn his food from day to day, whose body is emaciated through starvation, would not indulge in excessive enjoyment of the senses; for they get dried up. He would no longer harm others for his own enjoyment and pleasure. Even though saints are absolutely impartial and make no distinction between the rich and the poor, it is easier for the poor man to meet them; for he is already denuded of worldly enjoyments, and through the association of saints his desire for enjoyment also gets subdued and his heart is purified very soon. Saints who are possessed of equal vision, and are constantly thirsting for the nectar of the lotus Feet of the Lord, have nothing to do with the wicked, the repository of all evils, who are intoxicated with their pride of wealth. Such wicked men only deserve their indifference. These two Yakṣas are intoxicated with the wine called Vāruṇī and are blinded with the pride of wealth and power. They have lost all control over their senses and are addicted to women; I shall cure them of their pride arising from ignorance. Though sons of Kubera, who ranks among the guardian deities of the world, their ignorance and pride are so great that they are unconscious even of their present nudity. They, therefore, deserve to go down to the inanimate state of trees. This will cure them of their pride. Though born as trees, they will, however, through my favour and grace retain the memory of God and at the end of a hundred celestial years attain Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and developing devotion to His sacred Feet will be restored to their celestial body. (8—22).

Sri Sukadeva said: Having thus pronounced his curse, the divine sage Nārada repaired to the hermitage of Bhagavān Nara-Nārāyaṇa. Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva

were transformed into twin-born trees and were known as Yamalarjuna. In order to fulfil the words of Devarṣī Nārada, who is foremost among the Lord's devotees, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa dragging the husking-stand behind Him crawled on all fours to the spot where the two Arjuna trees grew together. The Lord thought within Himself: "Devarṣī Nārada is most beloved of Me, and these two are sons of my vicegerent Kubera; therefore, I shall carry out what has been prophesied by the high-souled Ṛṣi." With that purpose Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa crawled between the two Arjuna trees; and as He passed between them, the husking-stand fell crosswise and got stuck up with the trees. The cord was wound round the belly of the Lord; and as He gave a slight pull to drag the stand, the two trees got uprooted at once. Just a little pull by the Lord, who is the repository of all power and strength, violently shook the trunks, branches, shoots and leaves of the two trees, and both of them came down with a terrible crash. Two Siddhas came out of the trees like fire rising out of them, illuminating the directions with their superb lustre. Approaching Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all the worlds, they fell prostrate at His feet and joining their palms, with a purified heart, uttered praises to Him in the following words. (23—28).

"O embodiment of the three primal principles of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss, O great Yogi, who attracts everything to Himself, You are the Supreme Person living beyond Prakṛti. Learned Brahmans, well-versed in the Vedas, say that the whole of this universe, both manifest and unmanifest, is Your manifestation. You are the ruler of the body, vital airs, mind and senses of all living beings. You are all-powerful Time; You are all-pervading, imperishable

God Himself. You are Mahat, the second in order of the twenty-five principles enumerated in Sāṅkhya, and that Prakṛti which is extremely subtle and constituted of the three Guṇas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. You are the Paramātmā, the witness in every heart, who directly knows the works, thoughts, properties and existence of every gross and subtle body. You cannot be perceived by the Guṇas and modifications of Prakṛti, which are the objects of perception of the mind. Who is there on earth who, though encased in gross and subtle bodies, is capable of knowing You? There is none, because You existed in Your One State of Existence even before the creation of these bodies. Obeisance to Bhagavān Vāsudeva, the Maker of the entire Universe. O Lord! You have concealed Your glories by the Guṇas, which derive their light and power from You. Obeisance to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the Supreme Brahma. O Lord, Your deeds are such that ordinary men, conditioned by bodies, can never perform them. There is none who can compare with You in power, much less outvie You. It is such deeds which indicate that though having no corporeal frame, You have assumed a Form and descended among embodied creatures. O Lord! for the material and spiritual well-being of the whole world, You have this time descended as a Full Manifestation! You fulfil the desires of all. Obeisance to You, the Embodiment of Supreme Good, the Repository of Supreme Bliss. Obeisance to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the crest-jewel of Yadus, the dweller in every heart, the personification of Supreme Peace. O Ananta (Infinite), we are slaves of Your servants. Please accept our humble duty. We, guilty ones, gained the privilege of Your auspicious sight only through the grace of the revered sage Nārada. Please, now, give us permission

to return to our abode. But please bestow on us the blessing that we may not forget You there. Let our speech be engaged in recounting Your excellent qualities, our ears in hearing the most attractive stories of Your auspicious deeds, our hands in rendering services to You and our mind in contemplating on Your sacred Feet. The whole of this world is Your Abode; let our heads bow to every being in it. The saints directly represent Your Body, let our eyes be engaged in looking on them." (29—38).

Sri Sukadeva said : The Lord's ways are very peculiar. Thus praised by Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva Śri Kṛṣṇa the Lord of Gokula, tied with a cord to the husking-stand, laughingly spoke to them. (39).

Sri Bhagavan said : I already knew that you had been blinded by the pride of

wealth, and that the most compassionate sage Nārada had favoured you by bringing about your fall by a curse. The sight of those who devote their mind entirely to Me, and make no distinction among beings by regarding some as great and some as small, can never lead to bondage, but leads only to salvation. Can the sun ever bring darkness to the eyes ? Therefore, O Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva, be devoted to Me and return to your abode. You sought exclusive devotion to Me, which puts an end to Saṃsāra (transmigration). You have gained it; you may now go. (40—42).

Sri Sukadeva said : When the Lord said this, they both went round Him and repeatedly prostrated themselves before Him. Thus taking leave of that Supreme Lord, tied with a rope to the husking-stand, they both proceeded towards the North. (43).

Chapter XI

REMOVAL TO BRINDABAN FROM GOKULA, AND DELIVERANCE OF VATSĀSURA AND BAKĀSURA

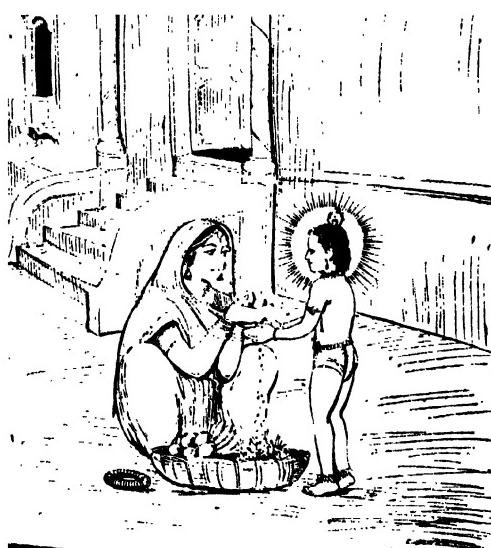
Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit ! the falling of the two trees made a terrible noise, which Nanda and the other Gopas heard. Suspecting it to be the sound of a thunderbolt, and seized with fear, they all came to the spot. There they saw the two Arjuna trees fallen to the ground. Though the cause of this fall was obvious—for the Gopas saw the child pulling the husking-stand tied to Him with a cord, yet they could not understand. 'Whose work is this ? How has this wonderful and portentous event come to pass ?—reflecting thus within themselves, they felt quite puzzled and perplexed. Some boys, who had been playing there, told the Gopas, "Why wonder ? This is all Kṛṣṇa's doing. He was passing between the trees, and the husking-stand fallen across, He gave a

pull, and the two trees came down with a crash. We further saw two persons coming out of the trees." But the Gopas did not believe what the boys said, for the reason that it was not possible for Him, a tiny child, to uproot the two trees. But some of them, remembering the other wonderful incidents of Śri Kṛṣṇa's life, began to suspect that after all what the boys said might be true. Seeing his son, who was dearer to him than life, tied with a cord and dragging the husking-stand behind Him, Nanda began to laugh, and quickly going near Him untied the cord, and set Him free. (1—6).

O Parīkṣit, many were the enchanting sports of the Supreme and Almighty Lord. Cheered by Gopa women with clapping of hands, He sometimes danced like an

ordinary child; sometimes He sang loudly like a simple and ignorant babe. He behaved almost like a puppet in the hands of the Gopis. At their bidding He would now bring them a wooden seat, now a weight for the weighing balance. He would sometimes fetch them a pair of sandals, and in order to please them, would strike His hands against His arms in imitation of wrestlers. Thus the glorious Lord brought extreme delight to the whole of Vraja by the playful activities of His boyhood, and showed those in the world who know His secret that He is always at the beck and call of His devotees. (7-9).

When the female vendor of fruits shouted "Fruits going, who will take fruits?" hearing her cries the Lord Achyuta, who Himself confers the fruits of all work and worship, would get impatient to purchase fruits and quickly run after her taking grains in the hollow of His tiny hands. Falling through His fingers, the grains would scatter on the way; but the fruit-seller would fill both His hands



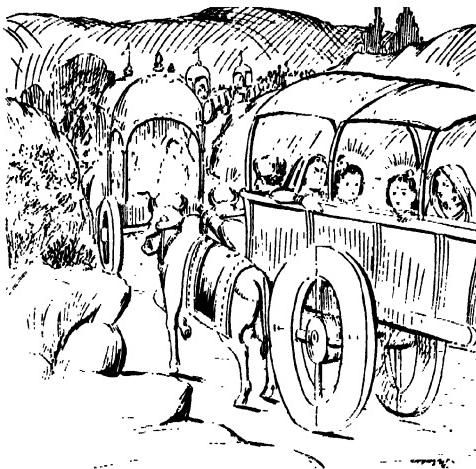
with fruits and such was the Lord's Lila, that her basket would get filled with precious stones in return. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went to play with other children on the bank of the Jamuna and got wholly absorbed in their play, mother Rohinī would shout for them: 'O Kṛṣṇa, uprooter of the Arjuna trees, O Balarāma, return home.' But unwilling to leave their play, they would remain indifferent to her call. Then Rohinī would send Yaśodā to fetch them. Totally engrossed in their play, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma would forget how late it was; the dinner time would bid fair to pass. Then Yaśodā would go to call them. Her bosom overflowing through affection, she would loudly shout: "O my darling Kṛṣṇa, O possessor of lotus-like eyes, O Beauty in a Blue Form, come, my child, quench your thirst at my bosom. Stop playing now, you must be quite fatigued and afflicted with hunger. O Rāma! come, darling! you are a good child; come soon and bring your brother with you. O joy of the house, you had your breakfast very early in the morning; it is time for you to dine now. O Rāma, my darling, the Lord of Vraja has gone to take his meals and awaits your return. Come with your brother and bring delight to our heart. O children, the associates of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, you also return to your homes. O darling, besmeared all over with dust, what a miserable sight you have become. Go, take a bath soon. Today, the star of your birth is ascendant. Bathing yourself, make a gift of cows to the Brahmans. Lo, look at your friends well-washed and adorned by their mothers with beautiful ornaments. You also take your bath and have your meals, and then getting spick and span with your dress and ornaments resume your sports." O Parīkṣit

mother Yaśodā's entire mind and heart were bound by the ties of love and affection for the Lord. She regarded the Supreme Lord, the crown of all the worlds, as her son; so addressing Him thus, she would hold Rāma with one hand and Śrī Kṛṣṇa with another and bring them back to her house. And, then, wholly merged in the ocean of Love, she would perform the necessary propitiatory rites for them. (10—20).

When Nanda and other elderly Gopas observed that Bṛhadvana had become a regular scene of portentous events, they met together and considered what should be done by them. There was among them a Gopa, Upananda by name, who was not only senior in age but was also superior in wisdom. He knew how one should deal with a particular thing at a particular time and a particular place, and was anxious for the safety and welfare of both Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Addressing the Gopas, he said : "Brothers, so many portents have appeared in this woodland that it has become distinctly unsafe for our children. We should leave this place, if we desire well of Gokula and its inhabitants. Here is the darling of Nanda seated in front of us; it was a miracle how he escaped from the demoness Pūtanā, who delighted in killing infants. It was, again, a grace of God that the huge cart did not fall on him. Next came the most terrible of dangers. The child was actually carried away into the sky by a demon in the form of a whirlwind; and when he fell from there on a rock, he was protected only by our ancestral gods. When the twin-born Arjuna trees fell, he was

actually between the trees, yet neither he nor any other child died. They escaped unhurt only because they were protected by God. Therefore, before a more fearful calamity overtakes and destroys Vraja and ourselves, let us take our children and go to some other place with all our attendants and followers. There is a forest, called Brindaban, not far from this place, full of thriving young trees, sacred hills, pastorage, herbs and plants, a most convenient and favourable place for cowherds, their women and cattle to live in. If you approve of my proposal, let us march for that place this very day. Let us make no delay. Let vehicles be got ready; and let the cows, which are our sole property, be sent in advance." (21—29).

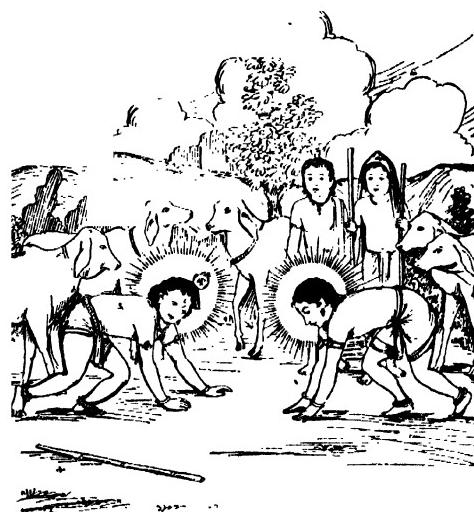
Hearing him, the Gopas unanimously expressed their approbation saying, "That's good ! Capital indeed !" They gathered their herds of cows, and loading the vehicles with household articles started for Brindaban. O Parikṣit ! they put on the carts the aged, the children, all women of their families, and utensils and furniture, and themselves followed the carts with great vigilance, armed with bows and arrows. They drove the cattle in front of them and made the journey blowing horns and trumpets at a high pitch on all sides. Their priests also went with them. The Gopa women, finely dressed, mounted the carts, with their bosom adorned with fresh saffron, with necklaces of gold about their necks, and proceeded singing of the sportful activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Yaśodā and Rohinī also, similarly dressed, mounted a cart and shone with Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa by



their side. They never felt tired of hearing the lisping of their children; the more they heard it, the more they liked it. Brindaban is a most beautiful forest. It is pleasant during all the seasons of the year. Entering it, the cowherds drew up the carts in a semi-circular line and selected a suitable site for the location of their cattle-wealth. O Parikṣit! at the sight of the green glade of Brindaban, the charming Govardhana hill and the beautiful banks of the Jamuna, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma greatly rejoiced. (30—36).

Thus, by their activities appropriate to childhood, and by their sweet lisping, Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa continued to delight the people at Brindaban as they had done at Gokula, and in due course began to tend young calves. Taking with them various articles of game, they would go out with the children of other Gopas and tended the calves in playful diversion, not far from their habitations. Sometimes they played upon their flutes, sometimes they shot with their slings; now they sang keeping time with

the anklets at their feet, and now guised themselves with other cowherd boys as cows and bulls, and fought with one another imitating the bulls and bellowing like them.



They imitated the cries of the peacock, the cuckoo, the monkey and other birds and animals. O Parikṣit, the Almighty Lord of the Universe thus roamed about and played like a common human child. (37—40).

Once when they were playing with other cowherd boys, and tending the calves on the bank of the Jamuna, there came a demon intent upon killing Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. The Lord discovered him in the form of a calf in the midst of His calves, pointed him out to Balarāma, and as if He knew nothing, slowly approached the demon. Then suddenly Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa caught him by the hind legs and tail, and wheeling him round and round in the sky struck him against a wood-apple tree. The life of the Daitya had gone out even while he was being wheeled round by Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and when his huge lifeless body

fell to the ground, it brought down several wood-apple trees along with it. Astonished at the sight, the cowherd-boys praised Śrī Kṛṣṇa by shouting "Well done, well done!" and the gods, being delighted, showered flowers on Him. (41—44).

O Parikṣit ! the sole protectors of all the worlds, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, were now playing the role of two cowherd boys. Getting up early in the morning, and taking their breakfast in their wallets, they roamed about from forest to forest, and tended the calves. One day, all cowherd boys led the calves under their respective charge to drink water in a lake. Reaching there they first refreshed the calves by allowing them to drink, and then drank water themselves. There the boys were frightened to see a monstrous creature, huge like a mountain peak, as if struck off from a mountain by Indra's thunderbolt. It was indeed the great Asura, known as Baka, who came in the form of a crane. Possessed of immense strength and a sharp beak, the monster suddenly rushed at Śrī Kṛṣṇa and swallowed Him. When Balarāma and the other boys observed that the huge Baka had swallowed Śrī Kṛṣṇa they lost their consciousness, and became inactive like the senses, when the Prāṇa, or vital breath, leaves the body. O Parikṣit ! Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the progenitor of even Brahmā, the father of all the worlds. He had assumed the role of a cowherd boy out of mere sport. As He reached the root of the crane's palate, He began to burn like a live charcoal. Therefore, the monster quickly threw Him out like a vomit without injuring Him, and then full of rage rushed upon Him to strike Him with his hard bill. Kaṁsa's friend, Baka, was about to strike the Lord, the refuge of His devotees, when He held the two halves of the bill each

with one hand and tore him to pieces like a blade of grass, as the cowherd boys stood looking on. The incident brought great



joy to the celestials, who showered jasmine and other fragrant flowers of the Nandana garden of heaven, blew their conches and beat their drums and tried to please the Lord by singing His praises. All these sights amazed the cowherd boys. Finding Śrī Kṛṣṇa, escaped from the jaws of Baka, by their side, Balarāma and the other boys felt as happy and lively as the senses, when the vital breath returns to the body. All of them embraced Śrī Kṛṣṇa severally. Then, leading back the calves, they returned to Vraja, and narrated the incidents of the day to the members of their respective families. (45—53).

O Parikṣit ! hearing the incidents connected with Bakasura's death, all the Gopas and Gopis were filled with astonishment. They felt as if their darling Kṛṣṇa had escaped from the very jaws of death. They

The Kalyana-Kalpataru



Deliverance of Bakasura

began to look at Him eagerly with intense love and thirsty eyes, and said among themselves: "What a wonder that this child entered the jaws of death so many times but harm befell those who sought to harm Him, since they had been guilty of harming others in the past. The fierce demons are not able to do Him any injury. Approaching Him with a desire to kill Him, they themselves perish like moths in the fire. The utterances of God-realized saints can never be false. All that the revered sage Garga predicted about this boy is coming out to be literally true." Thus joyously

recounting the deeds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, Nanda and the other Gopas felt themselves supremely happy. They used to get so much absorbed in these talks that the trials and sufferings of the world failed to make any impression on their minds. Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa would now play hide-and-seek blindfolding the eyes, now engage themselves in constructing mock dams and bridges, and now jump over in imitation of monkeys. Thus they passed their childhood in Vraja engaging themselves in many sportful activities. (54—59).

Chapter XII

DELIVERANCE OF AGHĀSURA

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit! on a certain day, with a mind to have His breakfast in the forest, Nanda's darling, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, got up from bed early in the morning, woke His fellow cowherd boys by the charming sound of His horn, and issued forth from Vraja with the calves walking in front of Him. Called by the sound of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's horn, thousands of young boys, who were Śrī Kṛṣṇa's devoted lovers, gladly set out from their homes, equipped with swinging nets for carrying food, canes, horns and flutes, driving their own calves in tecning thousands. They herded their calves with the innumerable calves of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and as they advanced, began to amuse themselves with childlike sports and plays. All the cowherd boys already wore ornaments of glass beads, Guñja seeds, gold and precious stones ; in addition they now adorned themselves with products of the forest like fruits of various colours, tender leaves, clusters of flowers, peacock-feathers, coloured minerals and the like. They stole

one another's net, cane or flute; and when the theft was noticed, passed on the things undetected to other fellows, who carried them to a distance. When the owner of the things appeared crestfallen, they would smile and throw them back to him. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa would go ahead of them to observe the beauty of the forest they would vie with one another in overtaking Him, and would feel extremely delighted when they caught Him up and touched His person. Some would play upon the flute, some again would blow the horn, others would hum with the humming bees, while still others would imitate the sweet notes of the cuckoo. Here some boys ran after the shadow of birds, and there some walked imitating the gait of the royal swan; some boys sat beside cranes closing their eyes, while others danced with peacocks observing the latter dance. Some pulled youngs of monkeys by their tails, while others climbed trees with them. Some made wry faces after the monkeys, while some began to swing from branch to



branch in imitation of them. Some boys going to the river began to splash water on one another, and some seeing the frogs jump began to hop like them; some laughed at their own reflections in the water, while some reproved the echoes of their own voices. O Parikshit! to the saints possessed of true wisdom, Bhagavan Sri Krsna is the enjoyment of absolute Bliss personified; to devotees who worship Him with the attitude of a servant He is the Supreme Deity, the Lord of Lords, possessed of infinite glory. And to people who are engrossed in the world and are deluded by Mayya, He appears only as an ordinary human child. Possessing an immense store of spiritual merit and being special objects of favour of the Lord, the cowherd boys sported with Him in these various ways. The dust of Bhagavan Sri Krsna's feet is inaccessible even to Yogis, who by practising austerities through many lives have subjugated their minds and senses. That very Lord, the Supreme Deity Himself, became a visible reality before them, and sported with the cowherd boys of Vraja.

This very fact brings out the glory of the privilege they enjoyed. There is no other way to describe it better. (1—12).

O Parikshit! at that time came there under Karṣa's direction a mighty Asura, called Agha, who was the younger brother of Pūtanā and Bakasura. He was such a terrible monster that even the immortals, who have partaken of ambrosia, felt themselves insecure in his presence, and anxiously awaited some occasion which would bring him death. When Aghasura saw Sri Krsna, Sridama and other cowherd boys engaged in their delightful and happy sports he felt stung at heart. He could not tolerate the sight. He said to himself, "This is the slayer of my brother and sister. I shall avenge the wrong done to them by killing Him with all these cowherd boys. When by their death they will serve as libation for the satisfaction of the souls of my brother and sister, the other residents of Vraja will automatically die. For children are the life of living beings. When the life itself is gone, how will the body remain? With their death the inhabitants of Vraja will die of themselves." Thus resolving within himself the wicked Asura assumed the huge body of a python and laid himself across the path. That huge reptile was eight miles in length and was as gigantic as a lofty hill. It was an extraordinary sight. Intending to swallow Sri Krsna and His associates, it kept open its cave-like mouth. Its lower jaw lay on the earth while the upper jaw touched the clouds; the corners of the mouth between them were like small caverns and its fangs looked like mountain-peaks. The interior of the mouth was covered by thick darkness. Its tongue appeared like a spacious road; the air it inhaled and exhaled came like a storm, and its eyes blazed like the forest fire. (13—17).

Observing Aghasura in that form, the cowherd boys imagined it was a part of the beautiful landscape of Brindaban, and, in their sportive mood, began to liken it to the gaping mouth of a huge python. Some said,



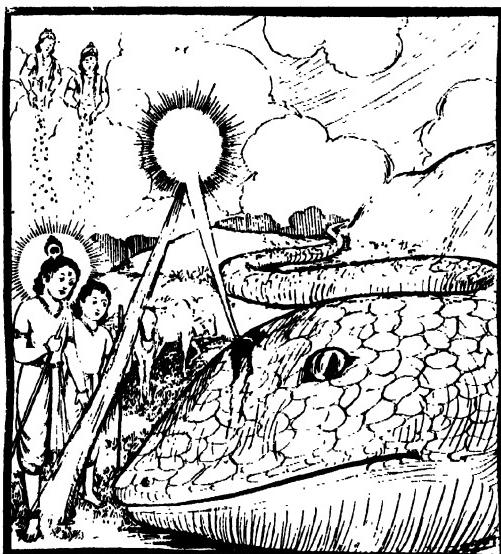
"O friends, tell me what is this lying before us, which looks like a thing possessed of life. Does it not appear like the open mouth of a wicked python eager to devour us?" Another said, "Yes, yes, the cloud reddened by the rays of the sun is just like its upper jaw; while the earth below, turned red by its reflection, is like its lower jaw." A third boy said, "Exactly so; do not these caverns on the right and left vie with the jaws of a python? See, those lofty peaks rising in a row quite resemble its terrible fangs." A fourth boy said, "O brother, this long and spacious road is just like the tongue of a python, and the darkness beyond those high peaks looks deeper than even the darkness of a python's mouth." Another boy said, "It appears the forest has somewhere caught fire. That is why we are getting these strong and scorching blasts. How exactly they resemble the breath of a python? The nauseating smell emanating from the animals burnt by the fire comes as the stench of a python's

stomach." Then, one of the boys said, "Would it devour us, if we entered its mouth? O, it can never do so. If it shows the impertinence to do so, in a moment it will meet with Bakāsura's fate. Will our Kṛṣṇa leave it alone?" Thus discussing among themselves, and with their eyes fixed on the bewitching face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Baka, clapping their hands and splitting their sides with loud laughter, all the boys entered the mouth of Aghasura. Listening to the misguided talk of those ignorant boys Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa reflected: "Taking a live python to be a false one, these boys are making fun with metaphorical words." O Parīksit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa at once knew that the huge creature before Him was a Rākṣasa. What can remain concealed from the Lord, who is present in the heart of every creature? The Lord now decided that He must restrain the cowherd boys from entering the monster's mouth. In the meantime, however, the boys with all their calves had entered the bowels of the Asura. And yet the latter did not close his mouth; for desiring to avenge the death of Bakāsura and Pūtanā he was waiting for their slayer, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to enter it, so that he might swallow them all at once. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the dispeller of everybody's fear. When the Lord found that the cowherd boys, who regarded Him as their sole protector, had slipped from His hands, and like the straw falling into fire had helplessly become food to the deadly fire of the Rākṣasa's hunger, He marvelled at the work of Providence and was touched with pity. "What is to be done now? How to kill this wicked creature without at the same time hurting these innocent boys? How to achieve both these purposes?" O Parīksit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is omniscient; the past, the present and the future are equally visible to Him. It was not difficult for Him to know by what means He would do this. So having decided what to do, the Lord entered the mouth of the Rākṣasa. Seeing this the gods, who had been observing

everything from behind the clouds, raised a cry of consternation and fear; while Kārṣṇa and other Rākṣasas, who were well-wishers of Aghāsura, greatly rejoiced. (18—29).

Aghāsura was planning to crush Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys, with all their calves, into powder; but hearing the cry of consternation of the celestials, the imperishable and omnipotent Lord in a moment expanded Himself to a huge dimension within the throat of the Rākṣasa. O Parikṣit, I have told you that Aghāsura possessed a huge body; but the Lord made Himself so large that the throat of the Asura got obstructed and his eyes shot up through suffocation. He began to toss about restlessly, and the breath completely blocked up in the lungs made its way out by splitting open his skull. Along with the breath, all his senses departed from the body, and the glorious Lord casting His life-giving glances on the dead calves and cowherd boys revived them, and came out with them from the mouth of the Asura. A wonderfully big and bright light emanating from the huge body of the serpent set ablaze the ten directions with its lustre and

waited in the sky till the Lord came out, and when He was out entered Him in the very presence of the astonished celestials. Then the gods rained down flowers, Apsarās danced, the Gandharvas sang, the Vidyā-dharas played on instruments, the Brahmans sang hymns of praises and the Gaṇas raised shouts of victory. In this way all of them offered their worship to the Lord, who by killing Aghāsura had accomplished their own purpose. The auspicious sound of those wonderful hymns, songs, instrumental music, jubilations and shouts of victory reached Brahmaloka, the abode of Brahmā. Hearing it, Brahmā at once left his abode and came to the scene of this occurrence and stood astonished at the glory of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. O Parikṣit, the dried skin of that huge python remained long at Brindaban as a strange cave to serve as a hiding place to the residents of Vraja in their sports. This feat of rescuing the cowherd boys from the very jaws of death and granting liberation to Aghāsura was performed by the Lord in His fifth year, but the cowherd boys witnessed it in His sixth year, and struck with amazement recounted it at Vraja. O Parikṣit, Aghāsura was the very incarnation of sin; but at the very touch of the Lord all his sins were washed away, and he attained the Sārupya type of salvation, which is impossible of attainment by sinful souls. But this is nothing to be wondered at. For though appearing in the guise of a human child, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was no other than the Supreme Being, the only Ruler of the Universe in its manifest and unmanifest state. O Parikṣit, if one is able to conjure up even once the conceptual image of a single limb of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that is enough to take him to the goal which is attained by His greatest devotees. You know that He represents the eternal realization of spiritual Bliss. Māyā cannot even touch His fringe. The very same Lord having entered the body of Aghāsura, could there be any doubt about his salvation ? (30—39).



Sri Suta said: Śaunaka and other sages! Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the crest-jewel of the Yadu race, was the protector of Parīkṣit's life. Hearing this sacred and wonderful story of the deeds of his Protector the king again questioned Śrī Śukadeva about it. For his heart was completely taken up by the nectarean story of the Lord's deeds. (40).

King Parīkṣit said: Venerable Sir, you said the cowherd boys narrated in Vraja, in Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sixth year, the story of the deed done by the Lord in His fifth year. Now, please tell me how an act done in the past can be described as having taken place in the present. O all-wise teacher, great is my curiosity to know this wonderful mystery. Please tell me what it is. Certainly, Māyā, who does all wonderful

things for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, must have a hand in this. For, how else could such a miracle happen? O teacher! though I am a Kṣatriya only in name, being guilty of deviation from the Dharma of a Kṣatriya, viz., that of service to the Brahman, yet I am indeed blessed that I am privileged to drink of the sweet nectar of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's stories constantly flowing from your sacred lips. (41—43).

Sri Suta said: O Śaunka, foremost of devotees, when King Parīkṣit made this request Śrī Śukadeva was reminded of that most wonderful deed of the Lord. All his senses and the mind were at once drawn to the eternal sport of the Lord. With difficulty and slowly he recovered the sense of the external world. Then he began to describe that deed of the Lord to Parīkṣit. (44).

Chapter XIII

BRAHMĀ'S DELUSION AND ITS CURE

Sri Sukadeva said : Parīkṣit, you are a blessed soul. You have developed supreme Divine Love in your heart. That is why this beautiful question has occurred to you. Although you have been listening without break to the stories of the Lord's incomparable deeds, you make them ever fresh by your relevant questions. Such is the nature of saints whose taste for the Divine Rasa (flavour) has properly developed. Although they constantly employ their speech, mind and ears to the singing, contemplation and hearing of the Divine glories, every moment they find newer and newer flavour in these

stories, even as sexually depraved people derive ever new enjoyment from the talk of women. Now listen to me with attention, Parīkṣit. Though this deed of the Lord was most secret, I shall apprise you of the same; for preceptors impart to their beloved disciples even what is most secret. I have already told you how Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa rescued His companions, the cowherd boys, from the mouth of Aghasura, who was like death itself. Now the glorious Lord brought them all to the sandy bank of the Jamuna, and said to them : "Beloved friends, this bank of the Jamuna is extremely charming; see how

soft and clean are its sands. It is a most agreeable place for our sports. Look at the lotuses of various colours in full blossom, whose fragrance has drawn hither the humming bees and those leafy trees full of beautiful birds whose bewitching notes are echoing in the waters. Let us have our breakfast here; the day is already far advanced and we are feeling hungry. Do not worry about the calves. Let them drink water and leisurely graze on the grass near at hand." (1—6).

The cowherd boys unanimously acclaimed the proposal. They led their calves to the water and after the latter had drunk allowed them freely to graze on the green grass. Then they opened their swinging nets in which they carried their food, and in great delight began to partake of the same with the Lord. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa sat in the middle of the group and the cowherd

in the forest with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they looked as beautiful as petals round the pericarp of a lotus. Some of the boys used flowers to serve as their plates, while some used leaves; some spread tender leaves and shoots, while some spread fruits and began to eat on them. Some began to eat directly from their swinging nets. Some took out their food on barks of trees, and some on pieces of stone, and began to eat out of them. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys began to describe the flavour of each other's food. If one of them said, "My food is extremely delicious, yours is tasteless," another would break in with the exclamation, "Mine is super-excellent, yours is much inferior to mine." Thus, they laughed and set others laughing in the course of taking their food. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beauty at the time was incomparable. Thrusting His flute into the garment round His waist and holding the horn and cane underneath His left armpit, He held a morsel of rice and curd in the hollow of His left palm and pieces of ginger, lime, pickles and jam between His fingers. Seated in the middle and surrounded on all sides by His comrades, He thus ate and cracked jokes, making the boys roll in laughter. Thus the Lord, who is the one Deity who enjoys the offerings of all sacrifices, ate with the cowherd boys exhibiting the sportive mood of lads, and the celestials in heaven looked at the sight in wonder and amazement. (7—11).



boys sat round Him in many a circle, all facing Him, with their eyes wide open through extreme delight. Thus seated for picnic

O Parīkṣit ! while thus taking their repast, the cowherd boys got wholly absorbed in the Lord. To say nothing of their calves, they even forgot themselves, and the calves

allured by luxuriant pasture strayed far into the forests. When the boys at last noticed this, they were overtaken with sudden fear. But Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who scares away the fear of His devotees, said, "O beloved friends, do not stop eating your food. I shall presently bring back all your calves." Thus assuring the boys, the blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with a morsel in His hand, started in search of the calves and began to look for them over mountains, in caves, arbours, dense forests and other most difficult places. O Parīkṣit ! Brahmā, the Lotus-born, had been watching all these incidents from the sky. The deliverance of Aghasura had caused him very great wonder. Now, he thought he must take this opportunity of enjoying the sight of some other glorious deed of the Almighty Lord, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who appeared as a human child out of mere sport. Reflecting thus, he carried away the calves, and kept them secure at some other place; and when the Lord had gone out of sight of the cowherd boys, he secreted the boys as well in some other place. (12—15).

Failing to find the calves, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned to the sandy bank of the Jamuna and observed that the cowherd boys also had disappeared. Then He searched for both on all sides of the forest. Failing to find them anywhere, the Lord at once detected that it was all Brahmā's work. For He being the Omniscient Lord, the One Knower of all that exists in the universe, what can remain concealed from Him ? Now, in order to bring joy to the cows, to the mothers of the cowherd boys and to Brahmā himself, the Lord Himself assumed the form of the calves as well as the cowherd boys. This was no difficult task for Him, who is the creator of the entire Universe. He manifested Himself

into the same number of calves and boys as had been missing, bearing complete resemblance to them in their appearance, size, the formation of their hands and feet, and in their gait, disposition, traits, manners, names and ages. He further transformed Himself into staves, horns, flutes, leaves, swinging nets, clothes and ornaments exactly similar to those carried by the missing boys. The truth of the Vedic dictum that 'the whole universe is Viṣṇu Himself' was thus demonstrated in a novel way. The duality observed in His previous sports having now ceased, He attained a beauty and splendour all His own. Being the Ātmā of all, He Himself now appeared as the calves and cowherd boys; and rounding up the calves, which were His very selves, in the form of their herdsmen, the cowherd boys, and playing various games with Himself in so many forms He returned to Vraja. In the guise of each particular cowherd boy, He separated the calves which resembled the calves belonging to the boy of that name and form and drove them to the house of the boy and tied them to their respective stalls. And He Himself entered the various houses in Vraja in the form of the various boys. (16—21).

Hearing the sound of the flute, the mothers of the cowherd boys impatiently ran to receive their respective sons, and regarding Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Brahma, appearing in different forms, as their own children, closely embraced those forms with their arms and suckled them at their breasts overflowing with milk, sweet as nectar, through excess of motherly affection. O Parīkṣit, according to the division of time fixed for every activity Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to return from the forest in the guise of those boys every evening and delighted the mothers with childlike sports; and the mothers in their turn would nurse Him

with great care and intense love by rubbing His body, giving Him bath, adorning Him with pigments of sandal and various ornaments and clothing Him with beautiful garments. They used to mark His forehead with collyrium as a protection against the evil eye and served Him with delicious food. Like the cowherd maid-servants, the cows also began to exhibit extraordinary love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa appearing in the form of their respective calves. They would return in haste from their pastures and entered the stalls anxiously lowing for their calves; and as they approached, they suckled the latter at their overflowing udders and licked them all over. O Parikṣit, these calves and cowherd boys were not the same calves and boys who had been secreted by Brahmā; God Himself was manifest in those forms. And yet the cows and the cowherd maid-servants of Vraja entertained the purest maternal feeling as before, devoid of all sense of glory. Only, their affection was markedly deeper and stronger. Similarly, in His behaviour towards them, the Lord also acted just as their own children; only like those children He did not labour under the delusion that He was their offspring. Day by day, for one complete year, the affection in the hearts of the people of Vraja for their children slowly went on growing, till it became as unlimited and as unprecedented as the love which they originally bore towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. For, really, they were manifestations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Thus for one whole year, assuming the forms of cowherd boys, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa tended and protected the calves, which were also His own manifestations, and spent His time in various sportful activities in the forest and at Vraja itself. (22-27).

When only five or six days remained for the completion of the year, Bhagavān

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, together with Śrī Balarāma, once entered the forest while tending the calves. At that time the cows were grazing on the summit of the Govardhana hill. From that distance they espied their calves grazing near Vraja. As they saw the calves their affection surged within them as in a flood, and forgetting themselves as in a trance, and ignoring their herdsmen, they ran



lowing for their calves following a way which was most difficult for either men or beasts to pass. Milk flowed freely from their udders, their necks disappeared due to contraction; raising their heads and tails they ran galloping in such breathless haste that they looked like creatures with only two legs. Even cows who had given birth to new calves, came to their former calves at the foot of the Govardhana hill and began to suckle them at their udders. They began to lick every limb of those calves with such intense eagerness that it appeared as if they would devour them. The Gopas tried hard to control the cows, but in vain. They felt disconcerted at their failure and got furious

with the cows. Having with great difficulty come down from the inaccessible part of the mountain, they met their own sons tending the calves. At the very sight of the boys, their hearts got merged in the ocean of love and their anger immediately disappeared in that flood-tide of affection. They lifted up the children in their arms, embraced them, smelled them on their crown, and were transported with joy. The aged Gopas were supremely delighted to embrace their children, and could leave them with great reluctance. Their eyes brimmed with tears of love when they were reminded of the children and their sweet embrace even later. (28—34).

Śrī Balarāma observed that the affection and longing of the cowherds, cows and cowherd maids of Vraja even for their offspring who had been long weaned was growing more and more intense every moment; and unable to divine its cause, he began to reflect as follows: "How strange it is that the Love which the residents of Vraja and I myself bear for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the One Soul of all, is being bestowed equally on these boys and calves, and it is growing in intensity from moment to moment ! What spell is this ? Whence has it come ? Has it been cast by any celestial, a human being or by some Asura ? No, it cannot be their work. Most assuredly it is none other than the Māyā, the illusive power of my beloved Lord; for no other creature has power to cast his spell on me." Reflecting thus, Śrī Balarāma opened his eye of wisdom and saw that those calves and cowherd boys were none other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Then he said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "O Lord, these calves and cowherd boys are neither celestials nor Rsis. Though assuming all these different forms, You alone appear through them.

Please tell me briefly why You are appearing differently in the forms of these calves,



cowherd boys, horns, cords and other equipments." In reply, the Lord apprized him of the trick played by Brahmā, and Śrī Balarāma came to know everything. (35—39).

O Parikṣit ! thereupon Brahmā returned to Vraja from His own abode, Brahma-loka. According to his own measure of time only a *truti* (time taken to pierce a lotus-petal with a sharp needle) had passed. He saw that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was playing with the cowherd boys and calves, even as He had been doing a year before. He reflected within himself: "All the boys and calves in Gokula I have kept under the spell of my own Māyā. They have not yet arisen. Then who are these boys and calves—other than those who are under the spell of My Māyā—and whence are they, that have been sporting with the Lord for one whole year ?" He saw the two groups of boys and calves at different places and tried to unravel the mystery

through his wisdom-eye, but could not make out who were the original boys and calves and who were new creations,—who were the real ones, and who were their imitations. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Māyā deludes all, but no Māyā or delusion can ever touch Him. In attempting to dupe Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he not only failed to deceive Him but was himself duped by His own Māyā. Just as the darkness of mist cannot be discerned in the darkness of night, and the light emitted by a firefly is merged in the light of the day, even so when a being with limited powers tries to cast his spell on the great, it not only fails to produce any effect but loses its efficacy for ever. (40—45).

Brahmā was still reflecting and looking on, when suddenly all the cowherd boys and calves appeared to him in the form of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All possessed the blue, cloud-like complexion and were clad in the yellow silken robe; all had four arms which wielded the conch, the discus, the club and the lotus. All wore crowns on their head, ear-rings, necklaces of pearls and garlands of sylvan flowers. All were adorned with a golden line on the chest—the mark of Śrivatsa—armlets, bracelets of precious jewels formed like a conch, bangles and anklets at the feet, zones and resplendent rings. All over their persons, from head to foot, they wore garlands of fresh, tender Tulasī leaves offered by virtuous devotees. Their smiles were as bright as moonlight, and the side glances of their reddish eyes were extremely sweet and enchanting. It appeared as if, by revealing through them the qualities of Sattva and Rajas, they were rousing the purest desires in the hearts of devotees and satisfying them. Brahmā, again, saw that all mobile and immobile creatures in their best forms—

from four-faced Brahmās like him down to the meanest blade of grass—were offering them worship with dance and music and various other courses of worship in different groups. They were all severally attended on all sides by supernatural powers like Aṇimā (the power of becoming small like an atom), etc., Māya, the divine illusive power, and other divine potencies and the Mahat and other principles, twenty-four in number. They were each of them waited upon by Time, Nature, Tendencies, Desires, Actions, Qualities and Results in personal forms with their powers eclipsed by those of the Almighty Lord. Again, Brahmā saw that they were not governed by the three divisions of Time—past, present and future—but were true for all time. All were self-conscious; all were embodiments of absolute infinite Bliss. There was no distinction of Matter and Spirit in them; all represented the One essence of absolute Reality. To say nothing of others, even the vision of illumined souls could not touch their infinite glory. Thus all at once Brahmā saw that they were all manifestations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Brahma and Oversoul, whose rays illumine the whole of this universe, consisting of mobile and immobile creatures. (46—55).

Seeing this wonderful, inexplicable sight Brahmā was amazed and perplexed. All his eleven senses (five senses of action, five senses of perception and the mind) were stirred and stunned. Overpowered by the divine majesty of the Lord he stood in silence like a doll by the side of the presiding Deity of Vraja. O Parikṣit, the divine glory stands beyond reason and argument. It shines by itself, it is perfect Bliss and is far above Prakṛti. Even the Upaniṣads fail to describe it in positive terms, and only indicate it by rejecting what

it is not. Though master of all learning, Brahmā failed to perceive this glory, so much so that he was no more able to see these glorious divine forms, his eyelids got automatically closed. Finding Brahmā lost under the spell of this illusion and quite incapable of piercing it, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly drew off the curtain of His Mayā without the least effort on His part. Thereupon Brahmā regained his consciousness of external things and rising with great difficulty like a dead man brought to life again, he opened his eyes and perceived the universe as well as himself. Then he looked round and saw first the several directions of space, and then immediately he saw Brindaban lying before him. Abounding in trees laden with leaves, fruits and flowers, the support of human beings, Brindaban is uniformly dear to all. Being the land specially graced by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the land of His sport, evils like anger, greed, etc. had no entrance there; and men and other species of animals who bear innate and inveterate enmity with one another, renounced their mutual hostility and lived amicably together. There Brahmā saw that the One without a second, the

Supreme Brahma was Himself playing the role of a cowherd boy. Though all by Himself, He had comrades and friends; though infinite and unlimited, He was moving hither and thither; though embodiment of absolute and infinite knowledge, He was searching for the calves and His playmates. Brahmā saw that even as before, with a morsel of rice and curd in His hand, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was looking for them alone. No sooner did he see the Lord than he hastily alighted from his vehicle, the swan, and laid himself prostrate on the ground like a staff of gold. He made obeisance by touching the lotus feet of the Lord with the crest of his four crowns, and bathed them with tears of joy. For a long while, repeatedly rising from the ground and falling at Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet, he remembered and contemplated on the glory of the Lord, which he had just witnessed. Then, getting up slowly, he rubbed the tears from his eyes. Again, he bent his head before the Lord, the fountain-head of Divine Love and salvation, and with joined palms and trembling body, began to praise the Lord in great humility with a voice choked with emotion. (56—64).

Chapter XIV

BRAHMĀ'S PRAISES TO BHAGAVĀN ŚRĪ KRŚNA

Sri Brahma said: "O Lord, You alone are worthy of all praises, I offer my obeisances to Your sacred feet. You possess a Body of azure hue like that of a cloud in the rainy season, clad in a yellow garment which shines like lightning, with a garland of Guñja seeds worn as necklace; Your large ear-rings and the crown of peacock-feathers on Your head are throwing the light of their resplendent jewels on Your incomparable

face. A garland of forest flowers hangs on Your chest, and You hold a morsel of rice and curd in the palm of Your small hand. With the cane and horn in Your armpit, You have stuck the flute, which is the mark of Your recognition, in the garment at Your waist. Your feet are as tender as the petals of a lotus, and You are dressed as a cowherd boy. O Lord, You are my sole refuge, I surrender myself at your sacred

feet. O self-effulgent Soul of the soul, You assume this transcendent Form of Yours



only to fulfil the desire of Your devotees ; You have showered Your grace on me by revealing this direct embodiment of Your supernatural will, which is of the very essence of the Spirit. Who says this Form of Yours is made of the five gross elements of Matter ? O Lord, it is a transcendent creation of purest Sattva. It is never possible for anyone, nor even for me, to gauge the depth of glory of this transcendent embodiment of Yours, even by going into Samādhi ; much less is it possible for anyone to comprehend the nature of absolute Bliss which You alone realize in Your heart and which constitutes Your very essence. O Lord, those who giving up their quest of Knowledge live only in the association of saints and hear from their lips the stories of Your deeds and sports—stories which can be automatically heard when one lives near saints—and devote their body, speech and mind exclusively to the hearing, repetition and contemplation of those stories, and make the divine

sports the very part and parcel of their life, so much so that life becomes impossible without them, conquer You by their devotion, though there is no one in these three worlds who can conquer you by any other means. O Lord, devotion to You is the source and fountain of every form of good. Those who, ignoring this path, undergo pains for the attainment of mere Knowledge gain nothing thereby beyond exertion, just as those who pound the mere husk take all the trouble of husking but get no rice. (1—4).

O Imperishable, Infinite Lord ! many a Yogi appeared on this earth before; but when they failed to realize You by their Yoga, they resigned all their worldly and religious activities to Your sacred Feet. Through this surrender of works to You and the hearing of the stories of Your deeds, they attained devotion to You. Through devotion they obtained an insight into the true nature of Your Form and state, and thereby easily attained You as the Supreme Goal. Although it is most difficult to perceive the glories of both Your Saguna and Nirguna aspects, yet it may be possible for those who have purified their hearts to know the glory of Your absolute state in the self-conscious state of the Ātmā. That is the only way of knowing it, inasmuch as Your absolute state is changeless, unperceivable and realized only as pure existence. But, O Lord ! who even among those who have by their consummate skill and labour through many births counted even the particles of dust, or the drops of mist in the sky, or the stars and planets in the firmament, could possibly count the infinite qualities of Your Saguna Form, the Form with Attributes, which You have manifested only for the benefit of the world ? So it is extremely difficult to realize Your glory. Therefore, O Lord, he who eagerly awaits only the

descent of Your grace and goes on quietly enjoying the fruits of his good and evil deeds in the form of either pleasure or pain, and dedicates himself to Your feet every moment with a heart full of love for You, a voice choked with emotion and a body thrilling with joy becomes eligible for Your Supreme State, even as a son acquires the title to inherit his father's estate. (5-8).

O Lord ! how unworthy it was of me to have sought to witness my own glory by casting the spell of my Māyā on You, the infinite, eternal Puruṣa and Paramātmā, whose Māyā holds its sway over the greatest of deluders like myself. O Lord, what am I before You ? What powers have I ? Can a small flame assert itself before Fire ? O Lord, born of Rajas, I have no proper knowledge of Your reality. That is why I laboured under the delusion that I was the supreme lord of creation, independent of You. I was blinded by the dense darkness of pride that I was the unborn creator of the world. Therefore, O Lord ! pray forgive me, knowing me to be Your servant, deserving Your mercy. O Lord ! encrusted with the coverings of Prakṛti, Mahat, Ahankāra, ether, air, fire, water and earth, this universe alone is my body ; whereas an infinite number of such universes pass to and fro through a single pore of Your body, even as particles of dust swim across a ray of light entering a dark room through some small window opening. How can there be any comparison between this insignificant creature possessed of a frame of three and a half cubits of length according to his measure, and Your infinite glory ? O soul of soul, incomprehensible by the mind and the senses ! does the kicking up of the feet of an infant in the womb constitute an offence to the mother ? Is there any object, signified either by positive or negative terms, which is not within You ?

I am also within You. Therefore, forgive me my trespass. (9-12).

Nay, the Vedas say, that at the time of final dissolution, when all the worlds lay merged into causal water, Nārāyaṇa lay upon that water and Brahmā emerged out of the lotus-stalk growing from the navel of Nārāyaṇa. This declaration of the Vedas cannot but be true. Then, O Lord ! please tell me, am I not Your offspring ? O Lord, You are the soul of all embodied beings; therefore, You are Nārāyaṇa (Nāra=Jīva+Ayana=support). You are the Supreme Lord of the Universe as well as of all Jīvas; therefore also, You are Nārāyaṇa (Nāra=Jīva+Ayana=impeller or controller). Again You are the witness of all; so, too, You are Nārāyaṇa (Nāra=Jīva+Ayana=knower). Even He who is called Nārāyaṇa because of His abode in water (Nāra=water+Ayana=abode) is a part manifestation of You. But the fact is, nowhere and at no time You subsist in part; You always abide as a whole. Therefore, You are seen as a part manifestation only because of Your delusive power. O Lord, if that all-encompassing Cosmic form of Yours was really on the causal water, why did I fail to perceive it when following the lotus-stalk I looked for it in the water for a full hundred years ? Then, when I took to austerities, how did I see it immediately in my heart ? And how did it disappear the very next moment ? All this proves that it was nothing but Your sport. O dispeller of delusion, in this very Avatāra You showed the whole external world within Your bowels, seeing which mother Yaśodā was struck with wonder. This proves that the universe is nothing but Your Māyā. But for your Māyā, how could the entire Universe together with You appear both externally as well as within Your bowels ? Certainly, all this is Your sport. Let alone

that incident, take the incident of today. Have You not just shown the entire universe exclusive of Yourself as a creation of Your delusive power? In the beginning You were all alone. Then You Yourself assumed the form of all the cowherd boys, calves, canes, horns and other equipments. Next I observed those Forms of Yours were all four-armed, and the primary Truths of creation including myself were serving them and offering them worship. You further appeared in the form of so many universes as well; but now You remain as the unlimited Brahma, One without a second. In fact, You alone exist; whatever else there is, is nothing but Your sport. (13—18).

To those who, due to ignorance, do not know You You appear as Jīva subject to Prakṛti. Spreading the screen of Māyā before their eyes, You appear as myself (Brahmā) at the time of creation, as Viṣṇu during protection and as Rudra at the time of destruction. But, as a matter of fact, You are the foundation of all the three; You Yourself are everything. O Lord, You are the Master and Ruler of all the worlds. Though unborn, you appear in the midst of celestials, Ṛṣis, men, beasts, birds and aquatic creatures in order to put down the wicked and favour the virtuous with Your grace. O Lord! You are the infinite Paramātmā, the Master of Yogas. When You spread Your Yogamāyā and engage Yourself in sports, who is there in all the three worlds, who could know where they are taking place and why, when they are taking place and in how many forms? The whole of this universe is, therefore, as unsubstantial as a dream, devoid of intelligence, a vast field of endless misery. Though from Māyā it rises and in Māyā it vanishes, in You it appears as true because of Your existence. You are Supreme Bliss, Supreme

Wisdom and Eternity itself. O Lord, You alone are true; for You are the soul, the Ātmā of all. Being the eternal, Perfect Person, You are untouched by modifications like birth and death. You are self-luminous; therefore You can never be limited by space, time and objects, which are illumined by something other than they. You are the primal illuminer of them all. Being imperishable, You are eternal. Your enjoyment is everlasting. Untouched by any form of impurity or want, You are perfect, One without a second, free from limitations and immortal. O Lord, You are really of such description; You are the soul of all souls,—the Antarātmā, or the very Self of all. Those who have gained the eye of wisdom through the grace of the Sun-like preceptor recognize You as the soul of all. They easily cross over this false sea of Samsāra, or worldly existence. The bondage of Samsāra due to Nescience exists only for those who do not recognize the soul as their self. The moment the wisdom dawns, this Samsāra quickly vanishes,—even as a rope appears as a snake due to ignorance, and disappears as soon as the ignorance is dispelled. The bondage of Samsāra as well as release therefrom are both conceptions formed in Nescience. They are, in fact, two aspects of the same Nescience. They are nothing separate from Paramātmā, the embodiment of Truth and Knowledge. Just as there is no distinction of day and night in the sun, even so it will be found on enquiry that in the pure and absolute state of eternal consciousness of the Ātmā there is neither bondage nor liberation. O Lord! though You are the Self, people regard You as other than the Self; and though the body and other objects are non-self, they are regarded as the self. And then, You are sought after without. How wonderful is this ignorance

of the ignorant ! O Infinite Lord ! You are, indeed, present in every heart. That is why the wise cast off all that appears as other than You, and constantly seek You within the heart. For though there is no snake in the rope, how can a man of even correct understanding perceive the rope without negativing the serpent ? (19—28).

O Lord, who flashes of His own accord in the hearts of His devotees ! Such is the character and glory of Your Knowledge that it automatically puts an end to the world conceived through Nescience. And yet it is only the recipient of even a ray of Your grace at Your lotus feet who can understand the truth of Your divine glory and power. No one else can understand this truth, however long one may seek it through practices of mere knowledge and dispassion. Therefore, O Lord ! grant me the privilege either in this life, or in the next, or even when I am born as a bird or a beast, that I may be one of Your servants and may devote myself to the worship of Your lotus feet. O Lord, all the great sacrifices performed since the beginning of creation could not bring You complete satisfaction; but as calves and cowherd boys You sucked the nectarean milk flowing from the udders of the cows of Vraja and the breasts of the Gopa women, and derived entire satisfaction and excessive pleasure from the same. Blessed, indeed, is their life, and most highly blessed are they. Blessed, again, are Nanda and the other Gopas of Vraja. Their merit and good fortune are wonderful and unlimited; for the embodiment of supreme Bliss, the perfect and Eternal Brahma Himself, has become their friend and relative. O Imperishable Lord, to say nothing of these Gopas, even we eleven deities, including Mahādeva, etc., who preside over the mind and the senses, are extremely blessed; for,

making the mind and senses of these inhabitants of Vraja our drinking cups, we continually drink the sweet nectarean honey of the lotus of Your feet. When we too feel ourselves blessed by tasting it through one sense, how great should be the fortune of the residents of Vraja, who taste it through all their senses and the mind ! O Lord, it is an incalculable blessing to be born in one of the glades of Vraja, especially in Gokula, even as a sub-human creature; for birth in this place will entitle one to the privilege of bathing the body in the dust of feet of anyone of your devoted servants. O Lord ! the life of the residents of Vraja, who are Your lovers, is entirely devoted to You. You are the be-all and end-all of their life. Therefore, the dust of their feet is as good as the dust of Your own feet. And the dust of Your feet is being sought after from eternity even by the Vedas. O worshipful Lord of even the celestials, what reward will You grant to these residents of Vraja in return for their services ? O fruit of all boons, I feel quite perplexed to think that there is no boon greater than You ! You cannot repay that debt even by offering Your own Self to them. For even Pūtanā, whose external appearance was like that of a virtuous woman, but who was most cruel and wicked at heart, attained identity with You along with her relatives such as Aghasura, Bakasura and others. Granting them the same boon, how can You repay the debt of the residents of Vraja, who have dedicated their all—their homes, wealth, relatives, friends, sons and even their body, life and mind—to You ? O embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss ! desire, hatred and other passions rob us of our virtues, the home serves as a prison-house to keep us in perpetual bondage, and ignorance acts as a fetter robbing us of our freedom only so

long as we do not surrender ourselves to You. O Lord! You are totally free from the taint of the world; and yet You descend on earth, and act on the stage of the world imitating the ways of men only with a view to spread the current of infinite bliss among Your devotees. O my Lord, I will not say anything more. Those who are capable of knowing Your glory, let them know it; to me, however, it is something beyond the reach of my mind, speech and body. O divine Śrī Kṛṣṇa, You are the witness of all; You are omniscient. You are the Lord of all the worlds; the entire creation rests on You. What more shall I say to You? Please accept me at Your sacred feet, and give me leave to go. O enchanting Lord who draws every heart to Him! You are the sun who will open the lotus of the Yadu race; You are the moon to bring joy and prosperity to the earth, to celestials and the cattle. You are like both the sun and the moon to dispel the darkness of unrighteousness sponsored and upheld as virtue by the wicked. O destroyer of Rākṣasas on earth, You are revered and worshipped even by gods like the Sun and the Moon, and by all other celestials. Let me bow to You all my life, to the end of the Mahākalpa, O most worthy and glorious Lord. (29—40).

Sri Sukadeva said: Parikṣit! Brahmā, the creator of the Universe, thus offered his praises to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Then he thrice went round the Lord, and bowing to His sacred feet, left for his own abode—Satyaloka. He had already restored the calves and cowherd boys to their original place from which they had been removed by him. Giving Brahmā leave to go the Lord brought the calves to the bank of the Jambu, where He had left His companions before. O Parikṣit! though a complete year had passed without the company of

the apple of their eyes, their life of life, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the children felt as if only a moment had passed; for they had all been under the spell of the Lord's Yogamāyā, who deludes the universe. Under the spell of Mayā all Jivas remain ever forgetful of their Ātmā, though they may receive repeated instructions about it from the scriptures as well as from their preceptors. Such is, indeed, the power of Mayā. Under the spell of its delusion what cannot be forgotten in the world? (41—44).

Parikṣit, observing Śrī Kṛṣṇa all the boys hailed Him with eagerness and impatience: "O brother, after all you have come; accept our heartfelt welcome. See, in your absence we have not eaten even a mouthful; now come here, let us fall to it, and have a hearty meal." Smiling at their words the Lord joined them in the picnic, and showing them the skin of the python, Aghāsura, on the way, returned to Vraja from the forest. The beauty and grace which the Lord exhibited at the time was wonderful. There was the crown of peacock-feather on His head, and beautiful flowers scattering intoxicating fragrance were stuck promiscuously on His curly hair. His blue body was painted with fresh minerals of various colours. While walking the way He now played on His flute, and now raised musical notes by blowing on leaves or the horn. Keeping measure with the notes, He would now and then dance a little with an enchanting half-smile on His lips. His companions followed Him singing His purifying glory. Calling the calves by their names every now and then, He would caress them a little. The Gopis stood on both sides of the road. When His slanting, captivating gaze would fall on their eyes they would feel themselves merged in incomparable bliss. Thus the

Lord entered Vraja. On that day, returning to Vraja, the cowherd boys said: "Yaśodā's son and Nanda's darling has this very day killed a huge python in the forest, and saved us from certain death." (45—48).

King Parīksit said: O wise sage, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not a child of the residents of Vraja. He was born elsewhere of other parents. How came, then, this unlimited love for Him in the hearts of the people of Vraja ? Such depth and intensity of love was never observed before even for their own children. Please favour me with the reason of this unusual phenomenon. (49).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parīksit, all beings love their own Ātmā (self) more than anything else. Children, wealth and other things are dear only because they give delight to the soul. That is why, O king ! the love of creatures for children, wealth, home, etc., which they call their own, cannot equal the love for their own self. O beloved of the Lord, Parīksit, even those who regard the body as the self love the body more than the relations of the body, e.g., children, friends, etc. When through reflection one comes to realize that 'I am not the body, the body is mine,' then love for the body itself grows less than love for the self. That is why even when the body is worn out, the desire to live remains as strong as ever. This proves that every being loves the Ātmā most of all, and the love exhibited for other mobile and immobile creatures is done only for the sake of the Ātmā. Along with this fact, O Parīksit, know that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the soul within soul, the Oversoul of all. It is only for the good of the world that He descends to earth making Yoganāyā His instrument and appears to be invested with a body like any ordinary human being. Those who know the reality

about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to them all mobile and immobile existences on earth, and beyond them all manifestations of the Divine such as Paramātmā, Brahma, Nārāyaṇa, etc. will appear to be nothing but Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The fact is, O Parīksit, within and beyond the region of Prakṛti there exists nothing but Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All objects, which are cognized as existences, proceed from a cause, a supreme reality underlying them. You may call it Prakṛti, or by any other name. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Ultimate Cause of even that cause. Such being the case, what is there which may be called separate from Śrī Kṛṣṇa ? From time immemorial saints have taken refuge at the lotus feet of the Lord; His glories are extremely purifying. Those who resort to the boat of the Lord's tender feet find the sea of worldly existence as small and shallow as the footprint of a calf and cross it with the least effort. At every step they come face to face with the Supreme State. The trials and sufferings of the world cannot touch them. (50—58).

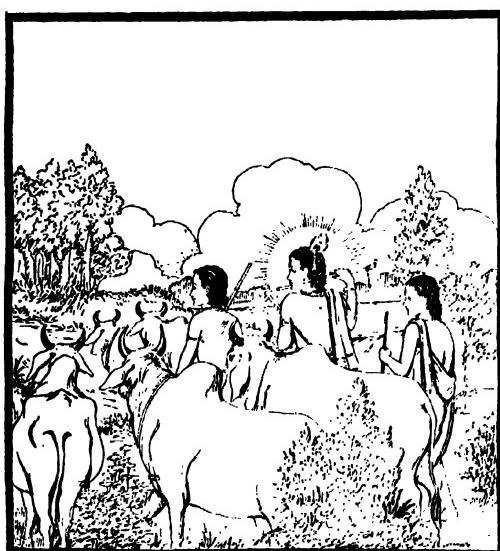
O Parīksit, you wanted to know why the cowherd boys reported in the sixth year what the Lord enacted in His fifth year. I have divulged the whole mystery to you. He who listens to, or describes, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's plays in the forest with the cowherd boys, His victory over Aghasura, His picnic in the forest on green turf, the manifestation of supernatural calves and cowherd boys and Brahma's praises attains all his desires. O Parīksit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma thus spent their infancy at Vraja in playing infantile sports. Now they blindfolded themselves and played hide-and-seek, now constructed imaginary bridges, and now jumped like monkeys; thus playing various sports they passed their days. (59—61).

Chapter XV

DELIVERANCE OF DHENUKĀSURA; THE COWHERD BOYS SAVED FROM THE EFFECT OF POISON

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, when Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the sixth year, they received permission to take the cows for grazing. Accompanied by their playmates, the cowherd boys, they used to go to Brindaban for tending the cows. Their footprints falling on the soil enhanced the sanctity of the place. One day Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, playing on His flute and bent on sporting, entered that beautiful forest together with Śrī Balarāma. All the trees

clear and transparent as the heart of saints. A cool breeze was blowing carrying the fragrance of innumerable lotuses in full bloom. Seeing this enchanting beauty of the forest Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, though devoid of mind, adopted the mind with a view to indulge in sports. Though the Lord was above desires, He desired to sport. He saw there large, full-grown trees so much laden with fruits and flowers that they bent low to the ground under their weight. When the Lord found that with their branches and tender crimson shoots they were touching His feet, He smiled a little out of pleasure and said to His elder brother, Śrī Balarāma. (1—4).



of the forest were in full blossom, and the ground on all sides was rich for pasture. The cows walked in front of Him, and the cowherd boys followed Him singing sweet songs of His glory. In that fascinating forest swarms of bees were sweetly humming, herds of deer were bounding here and there, and flights of birds were warbling. There were beautiful ponds containing water as

Bhagavan Sri Krsna said: O crest-jewel of Devas, while on the one hand great celestials deem it a privilege to worship Your lotus feet, even the trees of this forest, on the other, are bending their heads to You bearing offerings of fruits and flowers in their branches. This is quite in the fitness of things; for have they not taken birth as trees in Brindaban in order to dispel the darkness of ignorance? Blessed, indeed, are these trees! O Best of Persons, the repository of all virtue! though hiding Your divine glory You are playing as a child in this Brindaban, yet Your foremost devotees, the sages, recognizing You as their deity are engaged in the form of these bees in singing Your glory, which sanctifies the world. They are unwilling to leave You even for a moment. O Brother! truly speaking, You alone are worthy of praise. See, how the peacocks finding You come on a visit to their home are dancing in joy;

how these does, like the Gopa maidens, are expressing their love to You and are trying to delight You with their slanting, love-laden gazes. See, how beautifully the cuckoos are greeting You with their sweet notes. Though residents of the forest, all of them are extremely blessed. It is the nature of the virtuous to welcome their guest with the best things they possess. Blessed today is this earth, with all its green grass, herbs and plants, because of the touch of Your sacred feet. Blessed are the trees, bushes and creepers, that have received caresses from Your hand. Blessed are the streams, hills, beasts and birds that have come under Your kindly looks; and blessed are the Gopa girls for the touch of Your bosom, which is craved for even by Lakṣmī, the Goddess of Wealth. (5-8).

Sri Sukadeva said: Thus Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was extremely pleased at the sight of Brindaban, of surpassing beauty. Tending the cattle at the foot of the Govardhana hill and on the banks of the Jamuna, He spent His time in amusement with His companions. On one side, the cowherd boys were singing songs extolling His deeds; while on the other, seated with Śrī Balarāma, and putting on a garland of forest flowers, He would Himself hum in tune with the intoxicated humming bees. He would imitate the cackling of swans pouring forth their delight through loud songs of their own, and make His companions laugh by dancing according to the rhythm of the dancing peacocks. When the cows under His charge strayed far away, He would call out with affection every one of them by its proper name in a voice as deep as the rumbling of clouds. The sweet notes of His voice would fascinate the cows as well as the cowherd boys. Now He imitated the cries of birds like the Greek partridge, the

curlew, the ruddy goose and the skylark, and now acted like animals terrified by the roar of the lion, tiger and other beasts of prey. When Śrī Balarāma, fatigued after play, would lie resting his head on the thigh of a cowherd boy Śrī Kṛṣṇa would shampoo his legs, fan him and try to refresh His brother by other kinds of services. When the cowherd boys sang and danced, or slapping their arms wrestled with one another, the two brothers, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, would stand arm-in-arm and encourage them with smiles and words of approbation. After wrestling with cowherd boys, Śrī Kṛṣṇa also would now and then feel overcome with fatigue. Then He would go beneath a tree and rest on a bed made of tender leaves using the thigh of a cowherd boy as the cushion for His head.



Parikṣit ! at that moment some cowherd boys, who were the very embodiments of virtue, would begin to shampoo Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's legs, and some would fan Him with large leaves or the ends of their upper cloth. Some others, with hearts overflowing

with affection, would gently and sweetly sing of appropriate deeds of the Lord likely to bring Him delight. Thus with the help of Yogamāyā the Lord kept His divine glory concealed from the view of others. By His acts, He appeared just like an ordinary cowherd boy. He whose tender feet are fondled by Śrī Lakṣmī Herself, the Goddess of Wealth, thus engaged Himself in rustic sports together with rustic boys. O Parikṣit ! notwithstanding all this, His acts, now and then, used to reveal His divine power and glory. (9—19).

Among the friends and playmates of Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, a cowherd boy whose name was Śridāmā held an important place. One day he, Subala, StokaKṛṣṇa (Junior Kṛṣṇa) and other boys approached Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa and lovingly said : " O Rāma, O long-armed one, O Kṛṣṇa, chastiser of the wicked, at no great distance from here there is an extensive grove of palmyra trees. How shall we describe its beauty ? There are rows and rows of trees full of ripe palms which drop to earth every now and then, and the ground is literally strewn with them. But nobody can enter it, because of the presence of a wicked Asura, Dhenuka by name. O Rāma, O brother Kṛṣṇa, he lives in the guise of a donkey. Possessed of immense strength himself, he is accompanied by other Asuras in the same guise, equally strong as he. O vanquisher of foes, he has already killed and devoured so many men that people do not resort to that tract out of fear, and it is equally shunned by beasts as well as by birds. The fruits are very delicious to smell, but we never tasted them. You can perceive that sweet smell in a subdued form all about us, if you give attention to it. O Kṛṣṇa, our heart is taken up with the smell of these fruits ; please feed us with them. O Rāma,

great is our yearning for these fruits ; if it pleases you, let us all go there." (20—26).

Both Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma laughed when they heard these solicitous words of their companions, and intent upon complying with their wishes started for the palmyra grove, followed by the Gopa boys. Entering the grove Śrī Balarāma, like unto a young elephant in strength, held the trees with both his arms and shook them violently, bringing down numerous fruits from the top of the trees. When the Asura, in the form of the donkey, heard the sound of the fall of those fruits he galloped towards the spot, making the earth and hills shake under his feet. Extremely powerful as he was, coming up with his hind legs forward he violently kicked Śrī Balarāma in the chest, and braying in exultation the wicked brute ran away to some distance. Again, the brute came up in a rage with his hind legs towards Śrī Balarāma, and aimed his kicks at the latter. But Śrī Balarāma, with one hand, took hold of him by both his feet, and whirling him violently till he lost his life, hurled him with force against a very large palmyra tree. Struck by the body of the Asura, the great tree with a huge and heavy top shook violently and fell knocking down another tree close to it. The second tree in its turn brought down a third, and the third a fourth ; in this way many trees fell. It was a mere child's play to Śrī Balarāma. But struck first by the donkey's body, the trees struck one another so violently that the whole grove shook as if tossed by a tempest. O Parikṣit, Bhagavān Balarāma is God Himself. The whole creation rests on Him as the woven cloth rests on the warp and woof. What wonder that He should accomplish this feat. Then all the kith and kin of Dhenuka, braying in great rage, ran up to, and attack-

ed, both Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa with a view to retaliate the death of their brothers. O Parīkṣit, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa playfully caught those asses by their hind legs as they ran up to them, and dashed them against the palmyra trees. Scattered over with heaps of fruits and the bodies of the dead Asuras as well as the broken tops of trees, the ground at that place looked like the sky overcast with clouds. Witnessing the valorous deed of both the brothers the celestials showered flowers on them, sounded heavenly instruments of music and sang their praises. From the day Dhenukāsura was got rid of, people entered that grove fearlessly and ate palm fruits to their hearts' content; and the cattle also freely grazed on the pasture in that grove. (27—40).

Then the lotus-eyed Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned to Vraja accompanied by His elder brother, Śrī Balarāma, and followed by the Gopa boys singing His



praises. When one thus sings, or listens to, the praises of the Lord one gets purified. The beauty of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Form at the time

was quite indescribable. His curly hair was overlaid with particles of dust raised by the hoofs of the cows; the beautiful crown with peacock-feathers adorned His head, and beautiful wild flowers were stuck here and there in the curls of His hair. His sweet gaze and bewitching smile were winning the hearts of all creatures. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was playing on His flute, and the attendant boys were singing His glories. Hearing the sweet note of the flute, the Gopa women rushed out of their houses in crowds with their eyes wide open,—eyes which had been long thirsting for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sight. They now quenched the fire caused by His separation during the day and feasted the bees of their eyes upon the honey of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus-like face. Receiving their hospitality in the form of love-laden glances, mingled with bashful smiles and modesty, Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered Vraja. Yaśodā and Rohinī overwhelmed with maternal affection served the two boys, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as soon as they returned home, with things liked by their boys and suitable to the occasion. Shampooing and rubbing oil on their bodies the two mothers gave their boys a refreshing bath in order to remove the weariness of rambles in the forest, dressed them with fresh and beautiful garments and adorned them with garlands and sandal paste. Then the mothers served them with a hearty meal containing delicious articles of food, and after feeding them caressed them and led them to their fine, comfortable beds, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma enjoyed their sweet repose. (41—46).

Thus, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa passed His days in Brindaban in pastimes of various kinds. On a certain day, when Śrī Balarāma was not with Him, He led His companions to the bank of the Jamuna. The cows and

cowherd boys oppressed by the heat of the summer felt extremely thirsty and drank the bad water of the Jamuna contaminated with poison. O Parikṣit ! as Providence would have it, they had wholly forgotten that the water was poisonous, and all fell dead on the bank of the Jamuna as soon as they drank it. Finding them in that condition Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the Lord of even the greatest Yogis, revived them

all by showering on them the nectar of His looks. For they had no protector other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa. O Parikṣit, having recovered their senses they rose from the edge of the water and began to look at one another in great astonishment. Finally, they came to the conclusion that having drunk the poisonous water they had fallen dead, but had been brought to life again by the gracious looks of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (47—52).

Chapter XVI

GRACE ON KĀLIYA

Sri Sukadeva said: Parikṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw that the most venomous snake Kāliya had made the water of the Jamuna poisonous. Therefore, intent upon purifying the river He expelled the serpent from it. (1).

King Parikṣit said: O sage, you know everything. Please tell me how Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa chastised the snake under the deep water of the Jamuna. Secondly, the snake Kāliya not being an aquatic animal, how did it manage to live in water for ages together, and what compelled it to do so ? O worshipful sage, the Lord is omnipotent. Living an unfettered life, He reveals His sports in the world. The sports enacted by the Perfect and Absolute Lord in the form of a cowherd boy are very sweet, very noble. They are sweeter even than nectar. Who will feel satiated with draughts of the same ? (2-3).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, in the river Jamuna there was a deep pool inhabited by Kāliya. Its water used to boil on account of the burning poison of the snake. Birds flying through the air over the pool used to fall down dead. Touched by the

breeze that bore the spray from its poisonous waves all vegetation near the pool died out, and any living creature going near it met with instantaneous death. O Parikṣit, God's descent on earth takes place for the purpose of putting down the wicked. When the Lord found that the poison of the serpent was extremely virulent and strong, and that on account of it the river Jamuna, which had a part to play in His sports, had been vitiated, He tightened His girdle and climbing a lofty Kadamba tree stroked His arms, and from that height suddenly jumped into the deep pool of poisonous water. The water in the pool had been boiling due to the heat of the terrible poison. Fearful waves of red and yellow colour had been rising on its surface. When the Best Person of infinite strength, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, jumped into it the pool was all the more agitated, and its poisonous water overflowed its limits to the extent of two hundred yards. This is nothing to wonder at in the case of the Omnipotent Lord, Bhagavan Śrī Kṛṣṇa. O beloved Parikṣit, jumping into the pool the Lord began to sport like a noble and mighty elephant, splashing its waters and

striking them with His arms as He freely swam on its surface. The serpent Kāliya, whose senses of sight and hearing both were located in its eyes (as is the case with all serpents), heard the splash of water, and unable to tolerate this intrusion into its home came forth in irresistible rage and stood facing the Lord. It observed a beautiful human child, bluish in colour, in front of it. The child looked as bewitching and elegant as a cloud in the rainy season. There was a golden line—the mark of Śrīvatsa—in His chest, and He wore a robe of yellow colour. His feet were as tender and beautiful as the pericarp of a lotus. With a smiling face, He was sporting in the water in absolute fearlessness. In its rage the serpent stung Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His vital parts and completely enclosed Him in its coils. Seeing that caught in the coils of the snake He stood as if lifeless, His beloved friends, the cowherd boys, dropped to the ground and fainted out of grief, confusion, anxiety and fear. Parīkṣit, this was but natural on their part; for they had surrendered their all—body, friends, wealth, family and every enjoyment and desire to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The cows, bulls, calves and heifers all cried loudly in great distress. Fixing their eyes in wild consternation on Śrī Kṛṣṇa they stood motionless, as if weeping. (4-11).

At that very hour mighty and terrible portents of a threefold character appeared in Vraja. On the earth, in the heavens and in every individual body there appeared signs which clearly proclaimed that very great fear was at hand. Nanda and the other Gopas noticed those portents, and then came to know that on that day Śrī Kṛṣṇa had gone out to graze the cattle unaccompanied by Śrī Balarāma. They were seized with anxiety and fear. O Parīkṣit,

really speaking, they were ignorant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's power. That is why at the sight of those evil omens, they suspected He was no more. They were oppressed with grief, sorrow and fear; for they looked upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their life, as their very heart. O beloved Parīkṣit! the hearts of the people of Vraja, young and old, men and women, were as tender as that of a cow. When this idea occurred to them, they issued leaving their hearths and homes with a despondent and anxious heart, thirsting to see their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Balarāma, who was the Lord's own Self in another form, and equally almighty with Him, laughed when He saw the people so very anxious. But He said nothing, for He knew the greatness of His brother. The people of Vraja proceeded in search of Śrī Kṛṣṇa following the path indicated by His footprints, which exhibited the special marks of the Almighty, viz., barley-seed, lotus, goad, etc., and advanced towards the bank of the Jamuna. (12-17).

O Parīkṣit, between the footprints of cows and other men on the way they detected the footprints of Śrī Kṛṣṇa marked clearly with the signs of lotus, barley-seed, goad, thunderbolt, flag, etc., and marched with quickened steps. From a distance they espied Śrī Kṛṣṇa standing motionless in the middle of the pool completely caught in the coils of the serpent. On the edge of the pool, they observed the cowherd boys lying bewildered and unconscious, and all round them the cows and bulls and calves were loudly crying in distress. The terrible sight overwhelmed the Gopas with grief and knocked them senseless. The love of the Gopis for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the glorious and unlimited Lord of the Universe, was so deep and intense that no proper description of it can be given through human

speech. They constantly spent their time in remembrance of His friendliness, smiles, love-laden glances and sweet utterances. When those Love-intoxicated Gopis saw that their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa had been caught in the coils of the serpent, they felt sorely grieved. The whole universe appeared to them void without their beloved Lord. Mother Yaśodā, who also followed in search of her child, was about to jump into the pool, but was restrained by other Gopis of her age. Not that these last lacked in the degree of their sympathy and sorrow, they equally shared Yaśodā's grief and with overflowing tears stood with their eyes rivetted on the face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Some of them tried to console Yaśodā by recounting the wonderful stories of Pūtanā's deliverance, etc., indicative of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's power and glory. But most of them lay there like so many lifeless bodies. O Parikṣit, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the very life and soul of Nanda and the other Gopas. They were preparing to fall into the pool, but were prevented from doing so by Bhagavān Balarāma, who knew the power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, both by persuasion and inner guidance. (18—22).

O Parikṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa had allowed Himself to be enclosed in the coils of the snake just in order to imitate human ways, and remained in that condition for about an hour. When, however, He perceived that all the people of Vraja, men, women and children, were sore distressed on His account, and that truly He was their only support, He extricated Himself from the clutches of the snake in no time. In order to do so, the Lord inflated His body and made it very bulky. This exerted such a strain on the skeleton of the snake that being unable to bear the pressure on its joints it released its hold on Him and stood

holding up its hoods and hissing in violent rage. Staring at Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it looked for an opportunity to bite Him again. It was violently breathing out poisonous sprays through its nostrils. Its eyes were fixed and as red as tiles on fire. Throwing out flames of fire through its mouth it licked its jaws with its forked tongue and looked very terrible, indeed, with its eyes full of the heat of poison. Like Garuḍa, His own vehicle, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to sport with the snake, changing His position according to rhythm, now approaching it and now receding from it; and the snake also did the same with a view to get an opportunity to smite Him on a vital part. But gradually the snake lost its energy due to the exertion involved in rapid change of positions. Then the Lord pressed its large hoods a little, took a sudden jump and stood on them. The radiant jewels on the serpent's hoods painted, as it were, the lotus-like soles of the Lord with their crimson rays, and made them look all the more ruddy. Thus Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the originator of the arts of dance and music, began to dance on the hoods of the snake. When the Gandharvas, Siddhas, Devas, Chāraṇas and celestial damsels, all truly His own servants, guessed the Lord's intention to dance, they hastened in great devotion to wait upon Him with drums, kettle-drums, tabors and other instruments of music, with offerings of flowers and hymns of praises. O Parikṣit, the serpent Kāliya possessed one hundred and one hoods. The Lord, the chastiser of the wicked, trampled down with His feet of measured tread each one of the hoods that it would not bend. Thus its life-energy went on ebbing, and vomiting blood violently through every mouth and nostril and wheeling round it was overtaken by a swoon. The moment it regained

a little consciousness it emitted poison through its eyes and hissed violently in rage. But whatever hood it attempted to raise was immediately bent and trodden by the Lord under His foot in the course of His dance. The spots of blood from the snake on the feet of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared as petals of red flowers offered to Him during worship. O Parikṣit, this wonderful dance of the Lord practically crushed all the umbrella-shaped hoods of the serpent. It had its whole body shattered and began to vomit blood profusely. Now it began to remember Nārāyaṇa, the primeval Person, the original Teacher of the world, and mentally sought refuge with Him. Seeing the great serpent sinking under the infinite weight of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who holds the entire universe within His belly, and seeing its umbrella-shaped hoods crushed with the strokes of His heels, the wives of the serpent felt greatly distressed and with their clothes, ornaments and braided locks falling in disorder betook themselves to the Lord. Full of anxiety at heart, leading their babes in their front, those virtuous women fell prostrate on the ground, and bowed to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the sole Lord of all living creatures. Knowing the Lord to be the protector of those who sought refuge with Him, they approached Him with joined palms for the release of their guilty husband. (23—32).

The serpent's wives said : O Lord, You have descended on earth for chastising the wicked. It is, therefore, quite in the fitness of things that You inflicted punishment on this guilty soul. You make no distinction between an enemy and a son, and treat them equally. Thus, when You inflict punishment on anybody You do so for the expiation of his sin, and thus bring him infinite good. Indeed, You have conferred

a boon on us; for Your punishment destroys all the sins of the wicked. The guilt of this snake is quite patent. For, had it not been guilty why should it be born as a serpent? We sincerely realize that Your wrath is also a blessing in disguise. Great, indeed, must be the austerities performed in a previous life by this snake, free from any desire for honour and offering honour to others; or it must have performed some highly virtuous deeds full of compassion for all beings. Therefore, O Lord, You have been pleased with it; for, identical as You are with all Jivas, that is the only way of winning Your pleasure. O gracious Lord, we wonder through what virtue this snake has earned the privilege of coming in contact with the dust of Your feet, for obtaining which even Goddess Lakṣmī, Your better half, had to deny Herself all pleasures, observe vows and perform long penances. O Lord, those who take refuge under the dust of Your feet seek neither the kingdom of heaven nor sovereignty over the earth, neither rulership over the nether regions nor the position of Brahmā, neither attainment of supernatural Yogic powers nor even Mokṣa itself, which brings eternal release from the cycle of births and deaths. O Lord, this chief of serpents is born of a species which is Tamasic in quality; it is full of wrath and the spirit of revenge. And yet it has gained the dust of Your feet, so difficult to attain by others, even a desire to gain which brings the soul caught in the whirligig of births and deaths not only worldly prosperity, which is comparatively so insignificant, but even Mokṣa, or final release from bondage. (33-38).

O Lord, we offer You our salutations. You are the eternal repository of infinite and unimaginable glory. Though enshrined in all hearts, You are yet infinite. The

support of all beings and of all objects, You exist even in the form of all objects. You are the Paramātmā beyond Prakṛti, the repository of all knowledge and intuition. Your glory and power are infinite. You possess infinite potencies of a transcendent nature; the Guṇas of Prakṛti and their modifications cannot touch You. O Perfect Brahma, O Propeller of Prakṛti, accept our obeisances. You are Time, which produces movement in Prakṛti; You are the support of Time and witness of the divisions of Time. Though You exist in the form of everything, yet You are distinct from all and are their witness. You are both the efficient and the material cause of the universe. O Lord ! the five gross elements, the subtle elements, senses, vital airs, mind, intellect and heart—the seat of them all—all these are You. By identifying Yourself with the three Guṇas and their products, You have hidden Your existence beyond the grasp of men. You are the infinite beyond space, time and all objects. You are subtler than the subtlest, never subject to any modification, always the same under all circumstances, and omniscient. Those who theorize about the existence or non-existence of God, and about His omniscience or otherwise, to them You appear just in the form of their theories. You are the meaning behind the spoken word, You are the sound of the word and You are the power which connects the meaning with the sound. We offer You our salutations. You are behind all instruments of knowledge such as Perception, Inference, etc. You are the source of the Śāstras, the possessor of perfect wisdom and self-evident Knowledge. You are the path of Pravṛtti, the code which enjoins worldly activity, and You are the path of Nivṛtti, the code which urges withdrawal therefrom. You are Yourself

the Vedas, the source of both the paths of Pravṛtti and Nivṛtti. We offer You our salutations, again and again. You are Vāsudeva, the son of Vāsudeva or embodiment of Sattva in the purest form; You are, again, Sankarṣana, Pradyumna as well as Aniruddha. Thus, You are the Protector of Your devotees, as well as of the Yādavas, in the form of these four Vyūhas or centres of organization. O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, we offer You our salutations. You are the light behind the mind and its modifications; You conceal Yourself behind these modifications, and yet it is through these modifications that You can be inferred. You are the witness of the Guṇas and their functions, You are self-revealed; we offer You our salutations. Your sports are beyond our comprehension. You sport eternally in Primordial Matter, and yet You are the cause of every subtle and gross phenomenon. Though prompter of the senses, You delight only in the Self. Your rejoicing in the Self is a natural quality with You and not something achieved by spiritual effort. You are cognizant of all movements in the universe, subtle as well as gross; You are the witness of all. From one point of view, You are beyond the universe; while from another, You are the Universe itself. But, really speaking, You are the witness of both the existence and non-existence of the universe; You are its cause. We offer You our salutations, again and again. (39—48).

O Lord ! though being devoid of the sense of doership You do no work and are actionless, yet using eternal Time as Your instrument, You carry on the functions of creation, protection and destruction of the universe through the Guṇas of Prakṛti. For Your sports are unfailing, Your thoughts are true. By Your glance

You wake up the latent desires of Jīvas, which constitute their character. There are three types of wombs in the world—wombs in which the quality of Sattva is predominant, and which therefore bring forth meek or gentle creatures; wombs in which the quality of Rajas is predominant, and which bring forth creatures of a disturbed nature; and wombs having a predominance of Tamas, which bring forth stupid types of creatures. All these are Your different forms for carrying on different forms of sport. But the Sattvic or gentle type of creatures are the special object of Your affection and care at present; for You have come down on earth for the protection of the virtuous and the maintenance and propagation of virtue. O Lord ! this snake, our husband, is also Your child, Your progeny. It has unwittingly offended You; let this first offence on its part be overlooked by You. O Lord ! You are the very embodiment of mercy, and this snake is a foolish, ignorant creature; therefore be pleased to forgive it. O Lord, be gracious unto us; the serpent is about to lose its life. The righteous are always kind to women. O Lord ! have pity on us, and restore to us our husband, who is the lord of our life. O Lord ! we are all Your servants, please tell us what service we shall render You; for those who carry out Your behests with reverence and faith, and serve You, easily get over all forms of fear. (49—53).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit, the hoods of Kāliya had been badly crushed under the heels of the glorious Lord. It had fallen unto a swoon. But when the wives of the serpent thus fervently prayed to Him, the Lord stopped His dance and let it go. Then, slowly Kāliya recovered its senses and regained consciousness.

Breathing with difficulty, and with great humility and supplication, it then spoke to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as follows. (54-55).

Kaliya said : O Lord ! by birth we serpents are extremely wicked, full of the quality of Tamas, very wrathful and vindictive. This is our nature. You know, Lord ! what a hold nature has on creatures, and how difficult it is to give up one's nature. It is owing to their nature that men cling to various kinds of evil persuasions. O Lord, this universe is Your own creation. Therefore, I have no hesitation in saying that according to the diversity of Guṇas, it is You who have created all the different forms of nature, and the different types of power, strength, womb, seed, mind and body. O Lord ! we, serpents, are also a part of Your creation. By birth, we are extremely wrathful. Deluded by this Māyā, which is so tenacious, how can we by our own effort shake it off ? O Lord, You are omniscient; You are the Lord of the whole of creation. You are the cause of our nature, and even of Maya. Now, please confer on me either Your grace or Your punishment, and do whatever You think proper with me. I have nothing more to say. (56—59).

Sri Sukadeva said : Hearing these words of Kāliya Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who appeared as a human being only by way of sport, said : "O serpent, you should stay here no more. Go to the sea immediately with all your kith and kin, children and wives. Let the water of the Jamuna henceforth be enjoyed by cows and men. Those who will remember and chant, every morning and evening, this command of Mine given to you will never have fear from snakes. This pool has become sacred because I have sported in it. Those who having bathed in it will offer its waters to the celestials

and manes, and observing fast will remember and worship Me, shall be absolved from all sin. I know that out of fear of Garuḍa, you left the Ramaṇaka island and came to live in this pool. But now your body being marked by My footprints, Garuḍa will no longer touch you. So you may go without fear." (60—63).

Sri Sukadeva said : Every deed of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is wonderful. The snake Kāliya and its wives were transported with joy to hear this command of the Lord and offered Him devout worship. They delighted the Lord of the Universe, who bears Garuḍa in His banner, by worshipping and offering Him celestial garments, wreaths of flowers, jewels and valuable ornaments, celestial perfumes and a beautiful garland of lotus flowers. Then they went round the Lord in great pleasure, bowed to Him, and sought His permission to go. Thereafter with wives, friends and children Kāliya proceeded to the Ramaṇaka island in the sea, an island specially re-

served for snakes. Through the grace of the Almighty Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who appeared



as a mortal out of mere sport, Jamuna was not only rid of her poison, but her waters at once turned as sweet as nectar itself. (64—67).

Chapter XVII

SAVING THE PEOPLE OF VRAJA FROM THE FOREST FIRE

King Parikṣit said : O sage, why did the snake Kāliya leave its home, the Ramaṇaka island? What wrong had it alone done to Garuḍa that the latter was so very angry with it ? (1).

Sri Sukadeva said : Parikṣit, formerly Garuḍa used to eat snakes. Therefore, the snakes had come to an arrangement that every month a snake would be offered as sacrifice to Garuḍa at the foot of a particular tree. According to this arrangement all snakes for their protection used to offer to Garuḍa their share of sacrifice every new-

moon day. The magnanimous Garuḍa was satisfied with this arrangement. But the snake Kāliya, son of Kadru, was very proud of its strength and poison, and despising Garuḍa not only stopped its offering but began to eat up itself the victim offered to Garuḍa by other snakes. O Parikṣit ! when the mighty Garuḍa, the beloved attendant of the Lord, heard this he got extremely angry, and intent upon killing Kaliya rushed at the latter with great force and vehemence. Seeing Garuḍa advancing in fury to attack it, Kaliya stood erect

spreading its one hundred and one hoods and attacked Garuḍa in return. Its only weapon was its fangs, with which it bit Garuḍa. Breathing deeply, it looked terrible at the time with its frightful tongues and wide open fiery eyes. O Parīkṣit, Garuḍa is Bhagavān Viṣṇu's vehicle; his speed and strength are incomparable. Kāliya's impertinence made him still more angry, and with a jerk of his body he threw Kāliya back to some distance. Then he dealt a severe blow at Kāliya with his left wing, which shone like gold. Stunned by the blow Kāliya fled and betook itself to the deep pool in the Jamuna, to which Garuḍa could not go, and which was beyond the reach of anyone else. The reason for Garuḍa's inability to go there was that it was the place where Ṛṣi Saubhari used to perform his penances. Once, though prohibited by the sage, Garuḍa being pinched with hunger carried away by force from this pool a big fish, which was his favourite food. At the loss of the chief fish, the other fish in the pool felt themselves helpless and miserable. Seeing their sorry plight the sage took pity on them, and for the future safety of all fish in the pool pronounced the following curse on Garuḍa:—"If he enters this pool again, and eats the fish living here, he will meet with instantaneous death. This curse pronounced by me can never be untrue." O Parīkṣit, Kāliya alone of all snakes was aware of this curse of sage Saubhari. Therefore, out of fear of Garuḍa, it had come to live in this pool; but now Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa giving it assurance of safety sent it back to the Ramaṇaka island. (2—12).

O Parīkṣit! then Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa adorned with celestial garlands, sandal paste, clothes, precious jewels and ornaments of gold came out of the pool. Seeing

Him all the people of Vraja at once rose to their feet, as if life had returned to the senses. Overflowing with joy, the Gopas began to embrace their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa with great affection one after another. O Parīkṣit! Yaśodā, Rohinī, Nanda, the Gopis and Gopas, all regained consciousness as soon as Śrī Kṛṣṇa came near them, and all felt their desires fulfilled. Śrī Balarāma also, who fully knew Śrī Kṛṣṇa's power and glory, embraced Him and began to laugh. All mobile and immobile things delighted at Śrī Kṛṣṇa's emergence from the pool. The hills, trees, cows, bulls and calves, all were filled with joy. Brahmans, who were family priests of the Gopas, with their wives came up to Nanda, and said : "O Nanda! your son, seized by the deadly snake Kāliya, has providentially escaped from its clutches. Bestow gifts on Brahmans to celebrate Śrī Kṛṣṇa's return from the jaws of death." Parīkṣit, Nanda was highly pleased with this suggestion made by the Brahmans and gave them gifts of cows and gold. The fortunate and blessed Yaśodā having got back her darling, who had been given up for lost, placed him on her lap, and pressing him to her bosom showered profuse tears of joy. (13—19).

Parīkṣit, the residents of Vraja and the cows felt tired after the day's sensation and were severely oppressed by hunger and thirst. They, therefore, did not return to Vraja, but spent the night on the bank of the Jamuna. It was the heart of summer, the forest was quite dry due to intense heat. At midnight a great wild fire suddenly broke out and surrounded the people of Vraja on all sides and threatened to consume them all. Their sleep being disturbed by the blaze of the fire, the residents of Vraja in their bewilderment sought refuge with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord appearing as



man only at His sweet will, in the following words : "O beloved Kṛṣṇa ! O Embodied Beauty in blue colour ! O highly blessed Balarāma ! both of You possess unlimited prowess. See, how this most terrific fire threatens to consume us, Your friends and relatives. Pray protect us from this huge devastating fire. O Lord ! we are not afraid of death, but we cannot leave Your lotus-like feet. Therefore, O Govinda ! please keep us beside Your feet, which are our impregnable asylum." When the Almighty Lord, Bhagavān Śrī Krṣṇa, perceived the peril and helplessness of His devotees, He swallowed up that dreadful fire. Being the possessor of infinite power, this was no act of wonder on the part of the Lord. (20—25).

Chapter XVIII

DELIVERANCE OF PRALAMBĀSURA

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit, the people of Vraja were very happy that Bhagavān Śrī Krṣṇa had come out unscathed from the pool of Kāliya and saved the people from the forest fire. Next day morning He entered Vraja along with them. The place was teeming on all sides with herds of beautiful cows, and the cowherds who followed Him went singing His praises. Thus assuming through Yogamāyā the form of cowherds both Śrī Rāma and Śrī Krṣṇa continued to sport in Vraja. It was summer at that time. People do not feel very happy during this season of the year. But in Brindaban even summer had its peculiar charms. It appeared more or less like spring owing to the natural advantages of the place. It was quite natural that it should be so; for Brindaban had become then the

place of residence of the most sweet, most beautiful Lord Śrī Krṣṇa and His brother Śrī Balarāma. The sharp noise of the cricket was subdued there under the continuous roar of waterfalls, and the landscape looked charming with trees of dense foliage rendered rich by the sprays that constantly settled on them. On all sides there were extensive meadows covered with a thick coating of green grass. The gentle breeze blowing from the rivers, lakes and waterfalls carried the pollen of lotuses and lilies of various colours. The residents of Vraja did not feel the scorching heat of summer owing to the continuous flow of this mild and sweet breeze. They were neither oppressed by the blaze of forest fire nor by the burning rays of the sun. The rivers contained a perennial flow of deep water,

whose waves beating against the banks made them fresh and green. The fierce rays of the sun failed to dry up the moist ground and meadows of green grass near the rivers. All round the place the surface of the earth was ever green. The trees in the forest exhibited flowers in full blossom from behind every leaf, spreading incomparable beauty and splendour throughout the forest. Delightful birds of variegated colours were warbling on the trees; the deer moving in large herds were frolicking on the ground. Peacocks were crying on some trees, and on some the bees were humming; while other trees resounded with the warbling of the cuckoo and the music of the crane. Seeing the forest exhibiting such surpassing beauty the embodiment of blue Beauty, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and of white Beauty, Śrī Balarāma, both desired to spend their time in diversion in that beautiful atmosphere. Leading the cows in front of them, and followed by the cowherd boys, the two brothers walked in the middle, Śrī Kṛṣṇa all the while playing upon His flute. (1—8).

Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and other boys adorned themselves variously with red corals, tufts of peacock-feathers, garlands of beautiful forest flowers and varieties of coloured minerals. Then some of them in sheer joy began to dance, some began to strike their arms and wrestle, while others began to sing at the top of their voice. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa danced, some of the cowherd boys would begin to sing, some would play on the flute and horn and some would clap their hands keeping time with the dance, while others uttered exclamations of praise. Parīkṣit! just as actors in a play applaud the hero of the play, even so the celestials disguised as cowherds and cowherd boys came there and sang the praises

of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma. The two boys, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, possessed of rows of side curls, sported by holding one another's hand and going merrily round and round, by taking long jumps in mutual competition, by throwing clods of earth in competition, and by engaging themselves in combats in the form of tug-of-war, wrestling, etc. Sometimes when the other boys danced Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma sang songs or played on the flute and horn, and praised them by shouting, "Well done, well done." They would throw at each other fruits like the wood-apple, nutmeg, myrobalans, etc. Blindfolding one of their companions, they would play hide-and-seek and run over a long distance to catch a friend. Now, they would imitate the ways of birds and beasts. Some would begin to jump like the frog, some would make faces and poke fun at others, some would swing from the branch of a tree, and some making two friends stand facing one another with arms stretched would swing on their arms and let themselves be carried as in a palan-



quin. Some would begin to imitate a king. Thus Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa played in Brindaban on the banks of its rivers, on its hills, in its dales, bowers, groves and on the banks of its lakes the very sports which are ordinarily played by boys in the world. (9-16).

One day, when Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa together with other cowherd boys were grazing the cows in the forest, there came an Asura, Pralamba by name, disguised as a cowherd boy. His intention was to carry away both Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. O Parīkṣit! although the omniscient Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa recognized the Asura as soon as He saw the latter, He nevertheless accepted the offer of friendship made by him. Pondering over the means of doing away with this false friend Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was the leader of all players, made a proposal to His friends: "O Friends, let us divide ourselves into two evenly-matched parties and play." Thereupon the boys divided themselves into two parties, some choosing to play under the leadership of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and others under the leadership of Śrī Balarāma. They played various games in which members of one party had to carry their rivals on their backs up to a certain point. The rule of the game was that the winners rode on the back of the vanquished. Thus grazing the cattle and carrying their victorious rivals on their backs and being carried by them when the tables turned, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the other boys came up to the banyan tree called Bhāṇḍīra. (17-22).

O Parīkṣit! on one occasion Śridāmā, Vṛśabha, and other boys belonging to Śrī Balarāma's party carried the palm in the play; and so Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the boys of His party had to carry the former on their backs. Vanquished in the play the glorious

Śrī Kṛṣṇa carried Śridāmā, Bhadrasena carried Vṛśabha, and Pralamba carried Śrī Balarāma. Considering Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be unconquerable the Asura had taken the latter's side in the play, and now bearing Śrī Balarāma on his back ran with great speed far beyond the point fixed for setting down the player he carried. Śrī Balarāma was as heavy as a huge mountain. So the great Asura could not carry him to any great distance. Being forced to slacken his speed, he resumed his own huge Asura



form. The ornaments of gold began to sparkle on his black form; and carrying as he did Śrī Balarāma, who was spotlessly white, he looked like a cloud illumined with flashes of lightning with the moon riding over it. With burning eyes, fearful teeth reaching up to the end of his eyebrows, red irregular hair looking like flames of fire, and shining bracelets and anklets, crown and ear-rings, the Asura presented a terrible sight. Seeing him soaring in the sky, Śrī Balarāma felt a bit nervous in the beginning; but the very next moment recollect-

ing himself, he became fearless. Śrī Balarāma saw that just as a thief carried away somebody's treasure, even so the Asura was carrying him away from his friends; and in great rage he hit the enemy on his head with his strong fist, even as Indra hurled his thunderbolt on the mountains. The blow was so severe that it smashed the head of the Asura at once. Vomitting blood through his mouth he lost his consciousness, uttered a loud cry and fell dead like a mountain struck by Indra's bolt. (23—29).

Śrī Balarāma possessed inordinate strength. Seeing Pralamba slain by him

the cowherd boys were greatly astonished, and shouted "Well done, bravo !" Śrī Balarāma was, indeed, worthy of all praise. Gopas, who were senior to him in age, pronounced their benedictions on him and praised his strength. With their hearts overflowing with love all the boys embraced him like one who had recovered from the jaws of death. The Asura Pralamba was the very embodiment of sin. The celestials were overjoyed at his death, and showering flowers on Śrī Balarāma praised him by raising shouts of "Well done, bravo !" (30—32).

Chapter XIX

SAVING THE COWS AND COWHERDS FROM THE FOREST FIRE

Sri Sukadeva said : Parikṣit ! when the cowherd boys were thus absorbed in their pastimes their cows grazing without any restraint went away to a distance, and attracted by green pasture entered into the deep recesses of the forest. Their goats, cows and she-buffaloes passing from one forest to another lost themselves in the woods and began to feel extremely oppressed by heat and thirst. Losing their way they finally entered a forest of reeds crying piteously for help. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and the other boys missed their cattle, they repented for their love of play and went in search of them. But there was no trace of the cattle. The cattle being the sole property and means of livelihood of the people of Vraja, they got dumbfounded at their loss. They tried to track their cattle by observing the grass blades cut by their hoofs and teeth, and their footprints on the ground. Finally, they discovered that having strayed into the forest

of reeds all their cattle had been screaming out of sheer helplessness. On this discovery the cowherds attempted to bring their cattle together and drive them back. But,



O Parikṣit, they were completely exhausted

and were moreover oppressed by a terrible thirst. Seeing their miserable plight, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to call every cow by her name in a voice as deep as the rumbling of clouds. On hearing their own names uttered, the cows felt extremely delighted and bellowed in response to those calls. (1-6).

Parikṣit ! when the Lord was thus calling the cows by their names a huge wild fire suddenly broke out in the forest, fire which appears as death itself to the residents of the forest. Helped by a strong wind the fire began to spread its fearful tongues on all sides of the forest consuming trees, creepers, birds, beasts and men by its mortal embrace. Seeing the fire advancing towards them from all sides the cowherds and cows, overtaken with fear, approached Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma for protection, even as people under the fear of death take refuge with Lord Nārāyaṇa. They said, "O Kṛṣṇa, possessed of infinite valour, O Kṛṣṇa, our Beloved ! O Balarāma, the possessor of immeasurable prowess ! We take shelter under the feet of You both. Look, how the wild fire threatens to reduce us to ashes. Pray protect us. Those who own You as their only friends and relatives, to whom You are their all, should not fall into a calamity of this nature. O Kṛṣṇa, do You

require to be instructed by us about Dharma ? You know the secret of all Dharma. You are our only Lord, we depend on You alone." (7-10).

Sri Sukadeva said : Hearing this piteous appeal of His friends Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, "Do not be afraid; close your eyes, all of you." The boys thereupon shut their eyes, and the glorious Lord, the Master of Yoga, swallowed up that fierce fire and rescued them from the impending peril. When the boys opened their eyes, they found themselves near the Bhāṇḍīra tree and greatly wondered how all their cows had been miraculously saved from the fire. Observing this Yogic power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the glory of Yogamāyā, as well as their miraculous escape from the wild fire, the boys thought Śrī Kṛṣṇa was no human being, but must be an immortal. (11-14).

Parikṣit ! when the day declined all the boys turned their cows homewards. Along with Śrī Rāma, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa also returned to Vraja playing on His flute. The cowherd boys followed Him singing His praises. In Vraja, in the absence of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, a single moment had been appearing as a hundred ages to the Gopa women. When the Lord returned, at His very sight they felt themselves transported with joy and merged in Supreme Bliss. (15-16).

Chapter XX

THE RAINS AND AUTUMN DESCRIBED

Sri Sukadeva said : Parikṣit, on returning home the cowherd boys told their mothers, sisters and other women all about the wonderful deeds done in the forest by Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, viz., their rescue from the forest fire, death of Pralamba, etc.

The aged Gopas and Gopis were astonished when they heard of these supernatural events and thought that two great celestials must have come down to Vraja assuming the forms of Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (1-2).

Then the rains set in. In this season of the year there is a regeneration and growth of all forms of life. The heavens look charming with bright circles round the sun and the moon. Rolling clouds, blasts of wind, flashes of lightning and peals of thunder disturb the placid atmosphere of the sky. Overcast with dark and dense clouds accompanied by flashes of lightning and claps of thunder, and with the sun, moon and stars rendered obscure thereby, the sky appears like the Jīva, which though same in essence as the Brahma gets covered by the three Guṇas. The sun, like the king, having through his rays exacted from the earth for eight months her toll of water returns that wealth to her during this time of the year. Just as a man of compassion seeing the people in distress sacrifices his very life in their cause, even so the dark clouds enlivened with lightning and tossed by tempestuous winds showered down delightful showers, which constituted their very life, over the surface of the earth. The earth, that had dried up and shrivelled owing to summer heat, being now drenched by the rains regained her full energy and vigour, even as a man performing austerities with some selfish motive gets emaciated during his austerities, but on the attainment of his desired object puts on flesh again. During the rains, the sky being overcast with clouds, stars and planets do not shine, but fireflies begin to twinkle as soon as the sun goes down,—even as with the advent of Kaliyuga, which is marked by an overgrowth of sins, pseudo-religions gain an ascendancy, and the Vedic religion gets extinct. Frogs, which had hitherto been hibernating, begin to croak on hearing the rumbling of clouds, just as Brahmachāris, on the completion of their daily obligatory rites, chant the Vedas according to the instruc-

tions of their teacher. Small streams, that had nearly dried up in summer, overflowed their banks, just as the body and riches of a libertine are diverted to a wrong use. With the profuse growth of green grass the earth looked green; with Indragopa insects it looked crimson; with the fresh appearance of fungi it looked white. These different colours made the earth appear as the army of a king dressed in uniforms of different colours. All the fields bore a rich crop. This was a source of infinite joy to the tillers of the soil; but not knowing that gain and loss in the world were subject to the will of Providence, the heart of the rich burned with anxiety for the maintenance of their authority. Nourished by the fresh rain water all creatures on land and in water put on a winning appearance, even as those who worship God and contemplate on Him get purified both internally and externally. During the rains the sea is generally very rough on account of strong gales; now it became all the more agitated and turbulent on account of the influx of rivers, just as the mind of the Yogi who has not conquered desires gets tossed and agitated on coming in contact with objects of desires. Beaten against by strong showers the mountain felt no pain, even as one who has surrendered his heart to God feels no pain even under overwhelming calamities. Tracks and paths, which were not cleared, got covered with grass and could not be easily distinguished, even as the twice-born giving up the study of the Vedas consign them to oblivion in course of time. Though the clouds were friendly to the whole world, lightning remained inconstant to them, just as a fickle-minded unchaste woman bears no constant love even to a man of merit, who serves her with money, etc. The rumbling of clouds filled all the

quarters of the heaven, and Indra's bow without a string appearing therein looked like Absolute Brahma in the whirlpool of creation, brought about by disturbance in the Guṇas of Prakṛti. The moon being screened by clouds, which are revealed by its own rays, did not shine brightly and became obscure; even as the spirit, which illumines the ego, is veiled by the latter and becomes obscure. The advent of the clouds brought joy to the peacocks, which they experienced through every pore of their being and expressed it through their dance and music; just as householders suffering intensely from domestic troubles and miseries, and getting disgusted with life, feel delighted when they come in contact with devotees of God. Trees, which had almost dried up due to the heat of summer, now sucking water through their roots grew beautiful and luxuriant with their leaves, flowers, shoots and branches; just as men performing penance get emaciated in the first instance, but when their objects are gained they regain their health and put on flesh. O Parīkṣit! the banks of lakes remained forbidding owing to thorns, mud and flow of water, and yet the crane never left it; just as men of vulgar taste and low passions, though troubled endlessly by their household duties, remain attached to their homes. When in this season the clouds pour down showers under Indra's direction the dams of rivers are breached and the boundaries of arable lands are obliterated, just as in Kaliyuga Vedic principles and regulations get slack, assailed by the pseudo-creeds propagated by unbelievers. Impelled by the winds the clouds showered down nectar-like water for the benefit of creatures, even as men of wealth, under the direction of Brahmans, satisfy the people from time to time through the practice of charity. (3—24).

Such was the beauty and exuberance of Brindaban during the rainy season. The date and rose-apple trees in the forest were laden with ripe fruits. Surrounded by cows and cowherd boys, and accompanied by Śrī Balarāma, the Lord entered that forest for the purpose of sporting therein. Owing to the excessive weight of their udders, the cows slowly wended their way; but when Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa called them by their names, they would out of love for Him hasten their steps. O Parīkṣit, milk would then freely flow from their udders and moisten the way. As the Lord passed through the forest He observed the forest people, both men and women, very happy and cheerful, the trees dripping honey through their leaves, and the waterfalls throwing out water in uninterrupted flow resounding the hills with the music of their sound. There were caves here and there to afford shelter against the showers. Sometimes when it rained heavily, the glorious Śrī Kṛṣṇa would take shelter in the hollow of a tree, or in some cave, and partaking of fruits, roots and other edibles of the forest would spend His time in pastime with His associate boys. Sometimes sitting on a slab of stone near a sheet of water, He would enjoy with Śrī Balarāma and the other cowherd boys the repast of curd and rice brought from home. In this season the earth being full of green grass, the bulls, calves as well as the cows, who were oppressed by the weight of their heavy udders, would fill their bellies within a short time, and lie down closing their eyes, chewing the cud in great satisfaction. In short, the charms of the rainy season were incomparable. They brought joy to all creatures. No doubt the season as well as the cows, bulls and calves, all were the Lord's special instruments of sport. And

yet the Lord felt gratified at their sight, and would praise them again and again. (25—31).

Thus Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoyed their days at Vraja during the rainy season. After the rains the autumn set in, driving away all clouds from the sky, and making the waters as clear as crystal, and the breeze mild and gentle. Just as the mind of a Yogi fallen from Yoga gets purified when he returns to the practice of Yoga, even so in autumn all reservoirs of water got purified through the appearance of the lotus. The advent of autumn cleared the sky of its clouds, robbed the insects and other creatures of their abundant and promiscuous growth, divested the earth of its mud and purged the waters of their turbidity; just as devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa puts an end to the difficulties and evils suffered by men belonging to the four Āśramas or orders of Brahmacharya (student life), Gārhasthya (married life), Vānaprastha (life of austerities) and Sannyāsa (life of complete renunciation). The clouds having distributed all their wealth, i.e., having completely emptied themselves of water, began to shine all the more brightly; just as the Sannyāsi possessed of a serene mind, who has given up desires of enjoyment in this world and the next, and renounced all thoughts of wife, children, home and material possessions, and is freed from all bondage, shines in the world. Somewhere the hills allowed their beneficent springs to flow, and somewhere they did not; just as men of wisdom impart at times the nectar of knowledge to qualified disciples, and at times they do not. Aquatic animals living in small and shallow pools did not perceive that the water in the ponds was going down every day, just as foolish men given to domestic

life do not perceive that their span of life is shortening from moment to moment. Creatures living in shallow ponds were being oppressed by the heat of the autumnal sun, just as a man stricken with poverty, loaded with a family, and having no control over his senses is oppressed by trials and tribulations of various kinds. The earth began to shed its moisture and the verdure its green appearance, just as a man of discrimination gradually sets aside the notions of 'I' and 'Mine' in respect of the body, and all belongings of the body, as distinct from the Ātmā. At the advent of autumn the sea became calm and still, just as when the mind gets freed of all promptings of desire the wise man, delighting in his self, gets calm and still giving up complicated ritualistic practices of the Vedas. By putting up dams in their fields the cultivators began to stop the flow of water, even as Yogis by restraining their senses from sense-objects preserve knowledge, which is dissipated by the senses. In autumn people suffer during the day from the scorching heat of the sun, but at night the moon allays their suffering; just as sufferings caused by identification with the body are removed by the light of wisdom, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa removes the suffering of the Gopīs caused by separation from Him. Just as the mind in which Sattvaguṇa is predominant, and which knows the secret meaning of the Vedas, shines, even so in autumn the night sky, being cloudless, shines through the sparkling of the stars. O Parīkṣit ! just as on earth Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yadus, shone amidst the Yadus, even so the full moon began to shine amidst the stars. The mild breeze that blew from the forest in full blossom removed the heat from which the people suffered; but it aggravated the

heat within the Gopis' heart, which had been stolen by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In autumn cows, hinds, birds and women being desirous of offspring, the bulls, stags, he-birds and males followed them, even as success attends the actions of a capable man. O Parikṣit ! just as on the advent of the king all people are rid of their fear, but not the thieves; even so at the rise of the sun all the lotuses opened their petals, but not the white water-lily which opens at night. The cities and villages put on a gala appearance owing to

celebration of the festival of new harvest and the worship of Indra. Corns were ripe in the corn-fields and the earth looked exceptionally beautiful owing to the presence of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma. Traders, ascetics, kings and students who had completed their studies, pent up by the rains, now freely moved and realized their objects; even as men obtaining Siddhi through spiritual practices attain their desired bodies when the time arrives. (32—49).

Chapter XXI

THE MUSIC OF THE FLUTE

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, the forest looked extremely charming owing to the autumn. The water was clear and a mild breeze was blowing charged with the fragrance of the lotus. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa together with the cows and cowherd boys entered it in order to enjoy the beauty of the scene. The edges of lakes, rivers and hills of that forest were adorned with rows of beautiful trees laden with flowers and green leaves. Bees intoxicated with honey were humming among them ; flights of birds of various colours were resounding the skies with their sweet notes. Entering this forest with Śrī Balarāma and the cowherd boys, and tending the cows, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to play upon His flute. The music of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute kindles Love for the Lord and the desire for union with Him. When the Gopis heard it from a distance they were simply transported with joy, and began to describe privately to their friends Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beauty and virtues and the power of the melody of His flute. They, no doubt, tried to describe the melody of the flute; but

its very remembrance brought to their mind Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sweet gestures, love-laden glances, the motions of His eye-brows and His enchanting smile. This enhanced all the more their desire to meet Him. They lost all control over their mind, and mentally reached where Śrī Kṛṣṇa was. How was their speech to function now ? Thus they lost the power to describe the melody of His flute. They mentally saw that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was returning to Brindaban. There was the peacock-feather fixed to His crown, yellow Karṇikāra flowers were hanging from His ears, the golden Pitāmbara (yellow cloth) was wrapped round His loins and a garland of five types of fragrant forest flowers hung from His neck. He was dressed like an excellent actor on the stage. He was filling the holes of the flute with the nectar of His lips. The cowherd boys followed Him singing His praises. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa was enhancing with His footprints the beauty of Brindaban, which as a region was superior even to Vaikuṇṭha. O Parikṣit, the music of the flute steals

the heart of all who possess a heart. Hearing this exquisite music, the Gopīs began to describe it to one another. They lost consciousness of the external world in the course of this description, and imagining Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be near them began mentally to embrace Him. (1—6).

The Gopīs said among themselves : O friend, to us it appears that this is the greatest fruit of being endowed with eyes—we do not know of any other which is greater than this—viz., to go on drinking uninterruptedly through them the nectar of the sweet face of our blue darling, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when together with His brother, Śrī Balarāma, and other cowherd boys, He drives the cows to the forest, or returns to Vraja with them, and holding the flute to His lips He casts His love-laden slanting glances on us. O friend! when they decorate themselves with tender mango shoots, peacock-feathers, bunches of flowers of various colours and garlands of lilies and lotuses, and when the yellow robe on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's body and the blue robe on Śrī Balarāma's body begin to wave, they appear most winning in this peculiar dress. Seated in the midst of cowherd boys when they start singing, they appear like two excellent actors on the stage. O friend, incalculably great must have been the meritorious deeds done by this flute, who directly enjoys the nectar flowing from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lips leaving very little for others. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is our monopoly. We even tied Him to the husking-stand. Why does the flute thus trespass on our property ? Seeing this exceptional privilege enjoyed by the flute the lakes and tanks, which gave it nourishment, are bristling with joy. The lotuses in full bloom indicate the horripilation of the lakes. But let them alone; even the trees, in whose line the flute took its birth, are dropping

tears of joy in the form of honey, just as devotees of God drop tears of joy when a devotee takes birth in their own family line. (7—9).

O friend, this Brindaban has extended the fame of the earth even up to Vaikuṇṭha; for it has gained the grace of being marked with the footprints of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the darling of Yaśodā. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa plays on His enchanting flute, the peacocks, being overjoyed, at once begin to dance keeping time with the music. They take the sound to be the mild roar of a blue cloud moving on earth. Hearing the note of the flute and seeing the peacocks dance, other animals stand motionless on hill-tops as if absorbed in Samādhi. O friend ! did you notice that when beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa putting on a wonderful dress plays on His flute even the deer, who are destitute of reason, together with their mates, come to Nanda's child, and offer in the form of loving glances their large lotus-like eyes to His feet as their offerings of worship. They are, indeed, highly blessed ! O, what a pity that we Gopīs of Brindaban cannot in a like manner offer ourselves to Him for fear of our relations and guardians, who look askance at us. But, O friend, let alone the deer ; even celestial women when they see the beautiful form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is a feast to the eyes of young women, and His captivating manners, and hear the wonderful tunes of the flute sweetly sounded by Him, sit by the side of their consorts in their aerial cars, deprived of all external consciousness, their braids getting loose and showering flowers, and their robes getting unsettled. Their intense longing for Śrī Kṛṣṇa deprives them of all control over their self and renders them helpless as it were. The cows erect their ears to drink the nectar of music flowing from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lips and stand motionless

with tears of joy in their eyes, as if embracing Śrī Kṛṣṇa in their heart. The calves, with their mouth filled with milk, freely flowing from the udders of the cows, can neither swallow nor throw it out, when they hear this music. Mentally embracing Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they also stand like statues with tears in their eyes. But leave the cows and calves, O friend; they are our household animals. Look at the birds in the forest. They are really no birds; but most of them are great sages, who seated on branches of trees full of charming shoots listen with unwinking eyes to the enrapturing music when Śrī Kṛṣṇa plays upon His Flute, shutting out all other sound from their ears. O dear friend, their life is truly blessed ! (10—14).

But let alone the celestials, cows and birds; they are all possessed of life. Take the inanimate rivers. The whirlpools in them indicate their strong desire to meet Śrī Kṛṣṇa. See, how their course is retarded when they hear the music of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute. With their arms of waves they throw their offerings of lotuses and take hold of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet with a view to embrace them. But these rivers belong to the earth, they are a part of Brindaban. Look at the clouds in the sky ! When they behold Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Prince of Vraja, together with Śrī Balarāma and other cowherd boys, tending the cows in the hot sun, and playing on His flute, they are filled with overflowing love and serve their friend, the blue Kṛṣṇa, by spreading themselves over Him like an umbrella. Not only this, they begin to throw on Him sprinklings of showers like offerings of tiny white flowers, and thus offer themselves at the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (15—16).

Blessed are the Bhil women of the forest, who begin to feel the pangs of Divine Love at the sight of the saffron sticking to the blades of grass in Brindaban. This saffron at first adorned the bosom of the Gopis and there coming in contact with the lotus-like feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was transferred to the blades of grass from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet. By picking up this saffron and smearing it over their face and bosom, the Bhil women allay their agony of Love. O Gopis! blessed is Govardhana, the prince among mountains. He is surely the foremost among Śrī Hari's devotees. See what untold bliss he enjoys at the touch of the feet of our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and of the delighter of the eyes, Śrī Balarāma. The privilege he enjoys of offering them and their cows a worthy worship with fresh water and good pasture, caves and edible fruits and roots is unique and incomparable. O friends! the ways of these two boys, one blue and the other white, are strange and peculiar. When rolling round their heads and carrying on their shoulders the strings and cords used in milking cows or catching wayward cows they lead their cattle from one forest to another, surrounded by the cowherd boys, and raise sublime notes with their exquisite flute, they make all mobile creatures like birds and beasts stand motionless, and immobile objects like trees bristle with horripilation. What a miracle does this flute play ! (17—19).

O Parikṣit ! the sportful activities of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Divine Sporter of Brindaban, are many and various. Mutually describing and singing of them, the Gopis used to forget themselves. They used to see these sports with their mental eyes. (20).

Chapter XXII

THE STEALING OF CLOTHES

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sports during the autumn had captivated the heart of the Gopīs. Now the cold season (Hemanta) set in. In the first month of this season the girls of Nanda's Vraja observed a vow and worshipped Goddess Kātyāyani. They ate only the purest food. At early dawn when the eastern horizon was about to put on a crimson appearance they bathed in the Jamuna, and making a sand image of Gaurī on the bank of the river worshipped Her with sandal



paste, garlands of flowers, delicacies of various kinds, incense, lights, tender shoots, fruits, rice and other offerings of various kinds. In the course of their worship they repeated the following Mantra : "O Kātyāyani, O Mahāmāya, O Goddess possessed of great Yogic powers, O Ruler of the Universe ! Pray make Nanda's child, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, our husband. O Goddess, we bow

to Your feet." Thus for a month they observed the vow, and having set their mind and heart on Śrī Kṛṣṇa worshipped Goddess Bhadrakālī with the prayer that the son of Nanda might become their husband. They rose very early in the morning being called out by name by one another, and holding one another by the hand loudly sang the praises of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they went to bathe in the river Jamuna. (1-6).

One day, having gone to the river they left as usual their clothes on the bank, and singing the praises of Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to sport in the river in great joy. O Parīkṣit ! Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of Yogīs like Sanaka, and even of the Lords of Yoga like Śāṅkara. The mind of the Gopīs could not remain hidden from Him. Knowing their innermost intention, He together with all His friends went to the bank of the river to fulfil the object of their vow. There He picked up alone all the clothes of the Gopīs and quickly climbed the nearest Kadamba tree. At this His companions, the cowherd boys, raised a peal of laughter, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa also laughed and jestingly said to the Gopīs : "O girls! come here, and take, if you like, your respective clothes. I speak in earnest, I am not joking. Enfeebled as you are by the observance of your austere vow, none can seriously joke with you. These, my friends, know that I have never told a lie. O beautiful lasses ! you may come and take your clothes one by one, or all at a time. I have no objection either way." (7-11).

Seeing that the Lord was joking with them the Gopa girls, overcome with affec-

tion and shyness, looked at one another and smiled, but did not emerge from the water. When the Lord spoke to them in this manner, their mind and heart tickled by the joke were drawn to Him all the more. Immersed up to the neck in cold water and shivering with cold, they spoke to Śrī Kṛṣṇa thus: "O beloved Kṛṣṇa ! Pray do not be so cruel to us. We know You to be the darling of Nandagopa. O dear, the whole of Vraja praises You most sincerely. See, how we are shivering with cold. Pray give us our clothes. O the most beautiful Kṛṣṇa ! We are Your devoted servants. We are prepared to do what You bid us do. O Kṛṣṇa, You know what is Dharma. Pray give us our clothes and molest us no more; or we shall approach Nanda and tell him all about your mischief." (12—15).

Bhagavan Sri Krsna said: "O girls, your bright smiles are full of purity and love. If you are, as you say, My servants, and are prepared to do My bidding, come here, and take your respective clothes." O Parikṣit! the girls, shivering and oppressed with cold, thereupon emerged from water covering their private parts with their hands. The Lord was immensely pleased with their innocence. Seeing their purity He placed their clothes on His shoulders, and said to them with a cheerful smile : "O Gopīs, the vow you undertook has been well maintained. But having entered the water in a naked state, you have insulted both the god of water, Varuṇa, and the river Jamuna. For the expiation of this sin join your palms on the crown of your head, and bow to them, and then take your clothes." Hearing what Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, the girls thought that their vow had been vitiated owing to their taking a plunge bath in the river in a naked state; and anxious to bring it to fruition they bowed

to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Witness of all doings; for through obeisance to Him all defects of works and lapses are removed and rectified. When Nanda's darling, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, saw that all the girls bowed down to Him as instructed by Him He was much pleased with their conduct, and mercifully returned them their clothes. O Parikṣit ! Śrī Kṛṣṇa poked fun at the girls, removed their shyness, trifled with them and treated them like toys; He went to the length of even stealing their clothes. Yet the girls did not find fault with His behaviour; on the contrary they were happy to find Him near them. O Parikṣit, the Gopīs put on their clothes; but their heart was so much captivated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa that they could not move from the place. Besides themselves with pleasure at this meeting with their Beloved, they remained rooted to the place with their bashful looks riveted on Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (16—23).

The glorious Lord knew that the purpose for which they had been observing their vow was to gain the privilege of touching His sacred feet; that was the sole ambition of their life. Then the Lord, who under the spell of love of the Gopīs had allowed Himself to be tied to the husking-stand, said to those girls: "O dear girls, I know your desire; you want to worship Me. It has My approval, it shall be fulfilled. You will succeed in worshipping Me. Those who devote their mind and heart to Me cannot be led by their desires to enjoyments of the world; for I become the object of their desire and coming in contact with Me their desires get burnt or purified. Just as a fried or boiled grain no longer remains fit to be used as a seed, even so desires directed towards Me cannot lead to worldly enjoyments. Therefore, O girls, go back to your

homes; you have accomplished your object. You will sport with Me during the coming autumnal nights. O virtuous girls, that was the object with which you observed your vow and worshipped Goddess Kātyāyanī. (24—27).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit ! thus commanded by the Lord, and contemplating on His lotus-like feet, the girls with great reluctance and difficulty went back to Vraja. They had, indeed, accomplished all the objects of their desire. (28).

O dear Parīkṣit ! on another day, accompanied by Śrī Balarāma and the cowherd boys, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while grazing the cows, went far away from Brindaban. It was the summer season. The rays of the sun were extremely severe. But the shades of the thickly growing trees in that forest served them as umbrellas. Observing this service of the trees Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, addressing the cowherd boys like junior Kṛṣṇa, Aśva, Śridāmā, Subala, Arjuna, Viśāla, Rāshabha, Tejaswi, Devaprastha, Varūthapa and others, said : "O dear friends, see how fortunate these trees are ! They live only for the good of others. Exposing themselves to the severities of the sun, wind, rain, and snow, etc., they protect us from the same. Highly blessed are they;

their life, I say, is the best life. For others get nourishment from them, they sustain other forms of life. Just as a mendicant going to a virtuous person does not return disappointed, even so these trees give something to whoever may approach them. With leaves, flowers, fruits, shade, roots, bark, wood, fragrance, resin, ashes, charcoal, tender shoots and the like, they satisfy the wants of all living creatures. O friends, this world is full of living beings; but the object of their existence is realized only when they use their wealth, intellect, speech and their very life-breath for the good of others." O Parīkṣit ! with clusters of shoots, bunches of fruits and loads of flowers and leaves, the branches of the trees bent low to the ground on both sides of the way. Speaking thus to His friends and associates, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa passed through them, and finally reached the bank of the Jamuna. The water of the river was very sweet, cool, wholesome and clear. The Gopa boys first led their cows to drink it and quench their thirst, and thereafter they themselves drank that sweet water to their heart's content. O Parīkṣit ! grazing the cows freely in the green glade near the bank of the Jamuna some of the boys felt hungry, and approaching Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma they spoke as follows. (29—38).

Chapter XXIII

FAVOUR ON THE BRAHMAN WOMEN

The cowherd boys said : O Balarāma, the delighter of our eyes ! You are extremely powerful. O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the stealer of our hearts ! You are the destroyer of the wicked. Hunger is oppressing us just like the wicked. Be pleased to find out some means to appease it. (1).

Sri Sukadeva said : Parīkṣit ! when the cowherd boys approached Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa with this request the Lord, intending to shower His grace on His devotees, the Brahman women of Mathura, replied as follows: "O friends ! a short distance from here, Brahmans versed in the Vedas are

performing a great sacrifice called Āngirasa for the purpose of attaining heaven. Go to their sacrificial hall. You should feel no demur in going there, because you are being deputed by us. Mentioning My brother's as well as My name ask for some rice from them." Thus commanded by the Lord, the boys went to the sacrificial hall and asked for food from the Brahmans. They first made obeisance by prostrating themselves on the ground, and joining their palms, said: "O Brahmans, who are the very gods on earth! We are cowherd boys of Vraja come to you under the direction of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma. Please attend to our submission. Bhagavān Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa grazing their cattle have come to a place only a short distance from here. They are hungry and desire that you should give them some rice. O Brahmans, you are the foremost among those who know Dharma. If you possess real faith please supply food to them both, when they have asked for it. O virtuous Brahmans, the objection about eating the food given by the sacrificer applies only to two classes of sacrifices—firstly, in the case of animal sacrifice, before the animal is sacrificed; and, secondly, in the case of the Sautrāmaṇi sacrifice. Except in these two cases, it is permissible to eat the food given by the sacrificer." Parīkṣit! although the Brahmans heard that the Almighty Lord sent them this request for food, they turned a deaf ear to it. They were seeking insignificant results like attainment of heavenly bliss and engaged themselves in an expensive and elaborate course of practices with this object in view. They were like children so far as real wisdom is concerned, although they were conceited enough to regard themselves as very superior in wisdom and

learning. O Parīkṣit! the time and place of sacrifice, varieties of oblations, the Mantras employed in diverse rituals, the rules governing the performance of rituals, the priests officiating at the sacrifice, the sacrificial fire, the deity sought to be propitiated through the sacrifice, the sacrificer, the sacrifice itself and the merit accruing therefrom—in all these forms Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is manifested. That perfect and highest Brahma beyond the senses, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, sought the gift of rice through the cowherd boys. But those men of impure understanding, who regarded themselves only as the body, looked upon even the glorious and Almighty Lord as an ordinary mortal and ignored His request. O Parīkṣit! when the Brahmans said neither 'yes' nor 'no', the cowherd boys lost all hope and returning disappointed reported the fact to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma. On hearing their report Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the glorious Lord of the whole universe, began to laugh. He told the boys not to get disheartened, for success in any undertaking in the world was attained only when repeated efforts were made for it. Again, He said: "O friends! this time you go and tell the wives of the Brahmans that I have come here together with Śrī Balarāma. They will give you as much food as you may require. They are extremely devoted to Me, and live in Me through their mind and thought." (2—14).

Now the cowherd boys went to the women's quarters, and found the wives of the Brahmans seated there in their best attire and adorned with beautiful ornaments. Bowing before those virtuous ladies, they humbly said to them: "O good ladies, please listen to us. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has come to a place not far from here, and

it is He who has sent us to you. Grazing their cattle He, His associate cowherd boys and Śrī Balarāma have come here leaving their homes far behind. He and His friends are all hungry, kindly supply them with food." Parīkṣit, those Brahman ladies had long heard the stories of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and their mind and heart had been taken up with them. They had been looking forward every day to an opportunity to see the Lord, and got impatient when they heard that He was present very near them. Taking in their vessels a large supply of the four kinds of excellent food—viz, (1) food requiring mastication, (2) food requiring to be swallowed, (3) food which has to be licked and (4) food which is sucked—they left their quarters to meet dear Śrī Kṛṣṇa, even as rivers rush towards the sea, ignoring the protests of their husbands, brothers, relatives and sons. It was no wonder that they should do so; for they had long heard of the virtues, sports, beauty and loving nature of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa of spotless fame, and had devoted their mind and heart to Him. They saw that on the bank of the Jamuna, in a grove of Aśoka trees, which were all adorned with tender leaves, the Lord was strolling with His elder brother Śrī Balarāma, surrounded by the cowherd boys. The yellow robe was shining brilliantly on the background of His blue complexion. A large garland of flowers was hanging from His neck. The crown on His head was adorned with peacock-feathers. His limbs were painted with minerals of various colours. With tender shoots stuck here and there, He looked like an actor on the stage. Resting one arm on the shoulder of a playmate who accompanied Him, He was swinging a lotus with another. His ears were graced with ear-rings of lotus and the cheeks with locks



of curly hair, and His lotus-like face was illumined with a charming smile. Parīkṣit! frequently hearing of the great glories and winning sports of their beloved Kṛṣṇa, these women had merged their mind completely in Him. Now they took Śrī Kṛṣṇa into their heart through the gates of their eyes, and there embraced Him long and allayed their agony of love; even as men suffering misery in their waking and dream states through the functioning of the concepts of 'I' and 'Mine' get rid of their affliction in deep sleep, getting absorbed in Prajña, or self as witness of deep sleep. (15—23).

O Parīkṣit! the Lord directly sees the mind of all, He is the witness even of the intellect. When He discovered that those women had set at naught the protests of their husbands, relatives, sons and friends, had given up all worldly hopes and desires, and had come in their eagerness only to see Him, He spoke to them smilingly as

follows: "O blessed ladies, welcome to you all. Please take your seats. Tell Me what I should do for you. You have come only to see Me. This is but meet and proper for you, inasmuch as your heart is so full of love. O good ladies! wise men who know their true interest cherish absolute devotion to Me as their most beloved object, without any selfish motive and without the obstruction of any sense of difference, hesitation, reserve, doubt or duality. Who can be more beloved of man than the Self, the Supreme Self, or I, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose contact and presence make life, intellect, mind, body, relatives, wife, children, wealth and all other objects of the world dear to him? Therefore, it was but meet and proper for you to have come here; I approve of your devotion. But now that you have seen Me, please return to the sacrificial hall. Your husbands, the Brahmans, are householders. They can successfully complete their sacrifice only when you join them in their rites." (24—28).

The wives of the Brahmans said : O Lord, the Inner Witness of all, Your words sound to us as cruel. It does not behove You to say like that. The Śrutis say he who even once reaches the feet of God has not to return to the world. Pray redeem this utterance of Your own expressed through the Vedas. Disregarding all our relations we have sought Your feet so that we may wear in our locks the wreath of Tulasi leaves that may fall from Your feet, that we may ever remain clinging to Your feet. O Lord! our husbands, parents, sons, brothers, relations and friends would no longer accept us, and we shall be discarded by everyone else in the world. O crown-jewel of heroes! We have laid ourselves at Your feet. We have no other goal or

support. Be gracious to extend Your protection to us. (29-30).

Bhagavan Sri Kṛṣṇa said : O good ladies, go back to your homes; your husbands, sons, parents, brothers and other relatives would not be displeased with you. To speak nothing of them, the whole world would be anxious to show you honour. There is reason for this. You have been accepted by Me, you are now united to Me. See, the gods also lend their approbation to these words. O ladies, mere physical nearness to Me does not make for love or devotion to Me. Therefore, you go and devote your mind to Me. You will, then, very soon attain to Me. (31-32).

Sri Sukadeva said : Parīkṣit! thus directed by the Lord, the wives of those Brahmins returned to the sacrificial hall. The Brahmins did not find fault with their behaviour, and jointly with their wives completed their sacrifice. Among those Brahman women, there was one who had been detained by her husband. Thereupon she concentrated her mind on the Lord's Form as conceived by her through hearsay. In that state of meditation she mentally clasped the Lord to her bosom, and cast off the physical encasement, which was the product of her Karma, and attained nearness to God through her pure Atmic body. With the four kinds of food brought by the Brahman women Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa first of all fed the cowherd boys, and then He Himself partook of the same. O Parīkṣit, the Lord's pastimes are all transcendental. Assuming a human form out of mere sport He thus imitated the ways of men, and delighted the cows, cowherd boys and the Gopa women by His charming exterior, engaging manners, lovely talk and sportful activities, and Himself derived utmost

pleasure by tasting their supernatural love. (33—36).

O Parīkṣit ! when the Brahmans subsequently came to know that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was God Himself, they greatly repented for their conduct. They thought that by turning a deaf ear to the request of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma, they had committed a grievous sin. For though behaving like mortals, they were God Himself manifested in those two forms. When the Brahmans observed that their women possessed superhuman devotion to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while they themselves were wholly wanting in it, they began to reproach themselves with a feeling of deep remorse. They said: "Alas ! Our minds are averted from Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. What is the use of our high birth, our investiture with the sacred thread and our initiation into the Gāyatrī-mantra, our proficiency in the Vedas and our skill in sacrificial duties ? Fie upon them. Fie upon our learning, our vows and our extensive knowledge; fie upon our pedigree and our expert knowledge of religious rites and ceremonies. There is no doubt, and it is proved even by our experience, that the Lord's Māyā deludes even the greatest of Yogis. That is why we call ourselves the teachers of men and Brahmans, though we are wholly ignorant of our true secular and spiritual interests. Lo ! Though these are but women, see what an intense and uninterrupted devotion they have for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Teacher of the Universe. They have broken asunder the fetters which tie man to household life, the fetters which cannot be broken even by death. They have neither gone through the purificatory rites prescribed for males of the twice-born classes, nor did they receive instruction in the Vedas in the preceptor's house. They

neither practised austerities, nor have they ever bestowed any serious thought upon the nature of the soul. They have neither purity of personal habit, nor any meritorious act to their credit. And yet they possess unswerving devotion to the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the most glorious Lord, the Supreme Lord of the Masters of Yoga. We, on the contrary, have gone through purifying processes, lived with our preceptors, performed austerities, enquired about the nature of the soul, practised purity and performed many virtuous acts; and yet we possess no devotion to the Lord's feet. Indeed, rendered stupid by our worldly pursuits and household activities we had become blind to our true interest. O, how great is the Lord's grace ! He reminded us about Him by sending us His message through the cowherd boys. The Lord is perfect by Himself; He is the fulfiller of all desires, even of the desire for Mukti, or liberation from bondage. If it was not to remind us about Him, what could be His motive in sending His messengers to insignificant men like us ? That was His real object in seeking food from us. Otherwise, why should He send any request to us,—He whom Laks̄mi, the Goddess of Wealth, constantly attends, ignoring all other gods, and shaking off Her faults of fickleness and pride, in order to have even once the privilege of touching His feet ? Such a request from the Lord for food could have no other motive except to delude the common people of the world. For the time and place of sacrifice, the varieties of oblations, the Mantras employed for the diverse rituals, the rules governing the performance of rituals, the priests officiating at the sacrifice, the deity sought to be propitiated through the sacrifice, the sacrificer, the sacrifice itself and the merit accruing from the

sacrifice—all these are but manifestations of God. The same Lord, the glorious Viṣṇu, the Lord of even the Masters of Yoga, has descended as Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the line of Yadu. Even though we had heard this, we were foolish enough not to realize the fact. But we are highly blessed that we got such women for our companions, by whose devotion our mind is now firmly settled on Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. O Lord, Your glory is infinite and inconceivable. Your intelligence, Your knowledge, is unlimited. Being deluded by Your Māyā, we are wandering in the maze of Karma.

We offer You our salutations again and again. May the Primal and Perfect Person, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, be graciously pleased to forgive us our trespass; for we are ignorant souls, deluded by His Māyā, who being unaware of His greatness deserve His indulgence. (37—51).

O Parīkṣit, those Brahmans had disregarded and insulted Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They now greatly repented for their error, and, in their heart, became eager to see the Lord, though being afraid of Kaupsa they could not go to see Him. (52).

Chapter XXIV

ABOLITION OF INDRA'S WORSHIP

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parīkṣit! dwelling in Brindaban Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, together with Śrī Balarāma, continued to enact various sports. One day He observed that the people were preparing for the worship of Indra. Śrī Kṛṣṇa being the indwelling, omniscient Spirit was aware of everything; and yet with great humility He approached the patriarch Nanda and other elderly people and asked them why they were so busy. He said, "O father! Please tell Me what is the occasion for your great activity? What is the festivity for which you are preparing yourselves? What is its fruit? What is its object? By whom is the sacrifice to be performed, and what are the means of its performance? O father, please tell Me all this; for my eagerness to gather from you all about our ancient practices is great. O father! saints who regard all creatures as their own self, who make no distinction between their own self and others, in whose eyes there are no friends, nor enemies, nor neutrals, have nothing to

conceal in the world. But in other cases a secret should be concealed as much from those who are neutral as from enemies. A friend, however, is said to be as good as one's own self; therefore, nothing should be concealed from him. Men in this world perform many acts with or without the knowledge of what they do; among them the full fruit is reaped by those who understand what they are doing, and not by those who do not understand it. Please explain to Me clearly whether what you are going to do has scriptural sanction, or you propose only to carry on blindly a traditional practice." (1—7).

Nanda said: My darling, Indra is the Lord of the clouds; in fact, the clouds represent his very being. It is these clouds which shower rain on earth, and bring both delight and life to creatures. We and all other people offer our worship to Indra by means of these sacrifices. The materials with which these sacrifices are performed are produced by the fertilizing water which is

sent down by him as showers. Whatever is left after offering him sacrifice, we use for our subsistence with a view to attain the three objects of life, viz., Dharma (religious merit), Artha (earthly possessions) and Kāma (worldly enjoyments). Indra is the dispenser of the fruit of our exertions. We follow this Dharma as a traditional practice. He who fails to observe it under the influence of either passion, greed, fear or hatred does not attain bliss. (8—11).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the ruler of even gods like Brahmā and Śankara. It was not at all difficult or impossible for Him to tame Indra. Hearing the reply of Nanda and the other residents of Vraja He, with a view to rousing the anger of Indra, said as follows to His father. (12).

Bhagavan Sri Krsna said: O father! a creature is born on earth by the force of his Karma (past doings), and by the force of Karma he dies. Happiness and misery, fear and safety, all these are occasioned by Karma. If as distinct from Karma, we believe in the existence of a Supreme Ruler who bestows the fruits of actions performed by different Jīvas, even that ruler can award the fruit only to a doer of Karma according to the nature of his deeds. He cannot exercise any authority over one who refrains from activity. When all creatures are enjoying the fruits of their own Karma, what need have they for Indra ? O father ! when Indra cannot alter what is pre-determined by the latencies of one's past deeds or what is decreed by Fate, what purpose can be served by him ? Man is subject to his nature formed by the latencies of his past deeds. He follows his own nature. The whole universe consisting of Devas, Asuras and men lives, moves and has its being in Nature. By the force of his Karma,

a creature attains a high or low birth and loses it. It is, again, Karma which makes him conceive another as an enemy, a friend or as one who has no interest in him. Nay, Karma is one's guide, Karma is the supreme ruler. Therefore, O father, it is man's duty to show respect to Karma by observing the duties devolving upon him by virtue of his Varṇa (caste) and Āśrama (stage in life), which again are determined by the latencies of his previous Karma. That which enables man to earn his livelihood without any difficulty becomes the object of his worship. Just as a fallen woman who serves a paramour leaving the protection of her own husband can never attain peace and happiness through him, even so he who leaves the deity who provides him with the means of livelihood, and takes to the worship of another, can never attain happiness. A Brahman should live by the study and teaching of the Vedas, a Kṣatriya by maintaining peace and order on earth, a Vaiśya by agriculture and trade, etc. and a Śūdra by rendering service to the three upper classes. The occupation of a Vaiśya is fourfold : viz., agriculture, trade, tending of cattle and usury. Of these, we are engaged only in tending cattle. O father ! the three Guṇas, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are respectively the causes of the existence, appearance and destruction of the universe. The whole of this manifold creation is produced by Rajoguṇa through the combination of the male and female principles. Impelled by this Rajoguṇa the clouds shower rains everywhere. The rains produce food, and food maintains all living beings. What function has Indra to perform in this connection ? (13—23).

O father ! we own neither any territory nor any city, neither a village nor even a

house. We are foresters; the forest and the mountains are our abode. Let us, therefore, undertake to offer our sacrifice to the cows, the Brahmans and the Govardhana hill. We may perform this sacrifice with the same materials as have been collected for offering worship to Indra. Let various preparations of food such as rice boiled in milk, puddings, cakes and soup of boiled pulses be made. Let the milk produced in the whole of Vraja be collected. Let Brahmans versed in the Vedas offer oblations to the fire, and let them be fed with various kinds of delicious food, and thereafter be presented with gifts of cows and their usual fees. Let the pariahs, fallen people and even dogs be properly fed, cows be supplied with fodder, and offerings be made to the Govardhana hill. Then, taking hearty meals and adorning ourselves with beautiful garments, ornaments and sandal paste let all of us circumambulate the cows, Brahmans, sacrificial fires and the Govardhana hill. Father, this is my view. If all of you approve of this idea, you may carry it out. This sacrifice will be gratifying to the cows, the Brahmans and the Govardhana hill, and will give exceptional pleasure to Me. (24—30).

Sri Sukadeva said: Parīkṣit! the Lord's desire was to put down Indra's pride, therefore He argued like this. He being the Lord of Time, none can go against His will. Nanda and the other Gopas received His words with approbation, and accordingly they did everything as Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa asked them to do. At first the Brahmans

performed the initial ceremony of invoking blessings for the success of the pious undertaking; offerings and gifts were made to the hill and the Brahmans out of the materials collected for offering sacrifice to Indra. The cows were fed with green fodder, and the Brahmans pronounced their benedictions. Then, with their cattle in front of them, Nanda and the other Gopas went round the Govardhana hill, keeping the hill always to their right. Some Gopas went in carts drawn by bullocks, and the Gopa women putting on beautiful garments similarly circumambulated the hill, riding on carts, and singing the exploits of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In order to confirm the faith of the Gopas, the Lord assumed another gigantic form, and manifested Himself on the hill-top. This second Divine Form told the people that he was the deity presiding over the mountain, and began to consume the mass of offerings placed before him. Together with the people of Vraja, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa made salutation to this other Form of His, and said—"I, appearing before us in a personal form, the deity presiding over the hill has shown his grace to us. He can assume any form he likes. He extirpates all dwellers of the forest who ignore him. Come, let us all make our obeisances to him for our own welfare as well as the welfare of our cows." Thus, offering their worship to the Govardhana, the cows and the Brahmans, as directed by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Nanda and the other Gopas together with Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned to Vraja. (31—38).

Chapter XXV

UPLIFTING OF THE GOVARDHANA HILL.

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit! when Indra came to know that his worship had been stopped, he was extremely angry with Nanda and the other Gopas. But what could his anger do, when Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the protector of the Gopas? Indra was exceedingly proud of his position, he thought he was the sole Lord and ruler of the three worlds. Full of anger, he commanded the destructive hosts of clouds called Saṁvartaka to invade Vraja. He said: "How great is the pride of these cowherds, who dwell in forests! Surely it is intoxication of wealth that has turned their heads. Depending on Kṛṣṇa, an ordinary mortal, they had the courage to defy even the Lord of celestials! They are just like the fools who hope to cross the ocean of worldly existence by paddling a rickety and nominal canoe in the form of performing sacrifices abounding in rituals instead of taking recourse to the true means of crossing the same, namely, Knowledge of Brahma. Kṛṣṇa, a talkative, ignorant, foolish, arrogant and conceited fellow, considers himself to be the wisest of men. He is a victim of death himself; and yet the foolish cowherds have taken shelter under him and given offence to us, the celestials. Proud of their wealth, they have grown insolent with Kṛṣṇa's backing. Therefore, O clouds, go and shake off the vanity caused by their prosperity and bring their cattle to destruction. I shall also follow you on my elephant, the Airāvata, accompanied by the most powerful Maruts (wind-gods), and destroy Nanda's Vraja." (1-7).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit! thus Indra commanded and let loose the violent

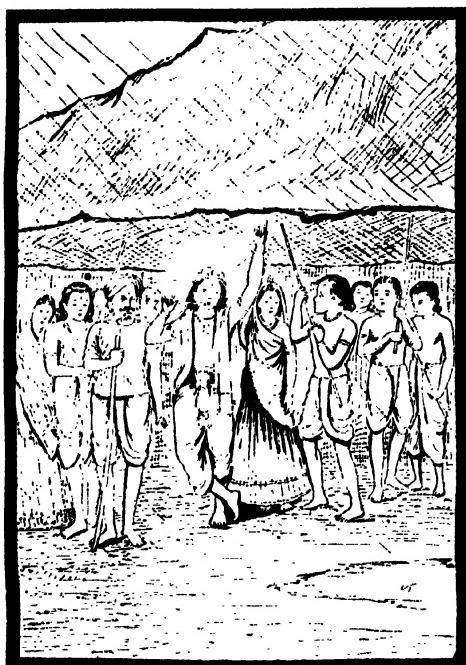
Saṁvartaka clouds, who bring about final destruction of the world. They attacked Nanda's Vraja in their full fury and started oppressing the people by their heavy torrents. Lightnings began to dazzle the eyes, the clouds rolling against one another began to roar and thunder. Tossed by a violent wind, they began to shower hailstones. Thus when they incessantly rained in torrents as thick as columns of water, the whole of Vraja was flooded by an abundant flow of water, and the high grounds could not be distinguished from the low, all being submerged under water. Smitten by excessive showers and tempestuous gales the cattle began to shiver with cold, and the cowherds and their women felt almost benumbed. Out of sheer helplessness they sought the protection of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Afflicted by the torrents they came protecting their heads and the children with their body, and shivering from head to foot with cold took refuge at the feet of the Lord. The Gopas and Gopis said, "O Kṛṣṇa! O highly blessed Kṛṣṇa! O Lord! You are the sole protector of Gokula, You are its only Lord. O Lover of devotees, be pleased to protect us from angry Indra." The Lord observed that being oppressed by rain and hail-storm all creatures had become almost lifeless. He at once knew that it was the work of angry Indra. He said to Himself, "Because I stopped his worship Indra has sent down this violent rain with storm and hail-stones, though it is out of season, only for the destruction of Vraja. Let me devise some suitable remedy for this through My Yogamāya. Out of foolishness Indra considers himself to be the ruler of the universe; I shall

smash his pride of wealth and power. I shall certainly dispel this ignorance from his mind. The celestials are endowed in a special measure with the quality of Sattva. They should not be proud of their position and glory. When they go wrong, it is quite in the fitness of things that I should put down their pride. That will do them good. It is well-known that the whole of Vraja recognizes Me as its Lord, and entirely depends on Me. I have taken it under My protection. I shall, therefore, protect it through My Yogamāyā. It is My eternal vow to protect those who depend on Me. An opportunity has arrived to fulfil that vow." (8—18).

Saying this Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa sportfully lifted up the Govardhana hill and held it high with one hand, just as a little child playfully lifts up a fungus and holds it high over his head in imitation of an

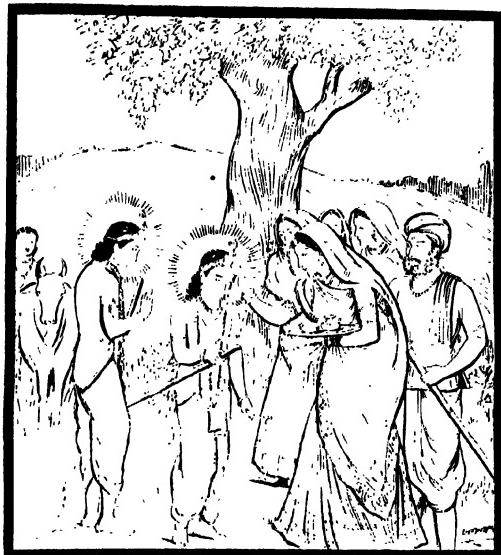
of Vraja ! Get yourselves into the cavity beneath the mountain along with all your cattle and other possessions, and rest there in perfect comfort. You need not entertain any fear that the mountain will fall from My hand. Do away with all your fear. I am holding up the mountain in order to protect you from rain and storm." When the Lord gave them this assurance all the Gopas with their cattle, wealth, carts, dependants and priests gradually entered the hole under the mountain. Forgetting hunger, thirst and the need for repose the Lord held up the hill for seven days consecutively, and did not at all move from the place, while the residents of Vraja stood looking on Him. Seeing this wonderful power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Yogamāyā, Indra was astounded. Foiled in his purpose, his pride was thoroughly shattered. He, therefore, commanded the clouds to stop their down-pour and clear out of Vraja. When the tempest ceased, the sky became all clear and the sun began to shine; Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Uplifter of Govardhana, said to the Gopas : "O beloved Gopas ! shake off your fear, and get out of this hole with all your women, children and cattle. The storm is over now, and the flood in the rivers has subsided." Thereupon those Gopas slowly came out taking with them their wealth of cattle, women, children and the old, and the carts loaded with their utensils and other goods. Then the almighty Lord, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, before the very eyes of all these people, sportfully set down the mountain in its original place. (19—28).

The heart of the residents of Vraja was filled with overwhelming affection. As soon as Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa set down the hill, they all came up to Him in haste and greeted Him with embraces and kisses.



umbrella. Then the Lord said to the Gopas : "O mother, O father, O residents

The old women joyously and lovingly marked His forehead with auspicious things



like curd, rice and water and pronounced

their blessings on Him. Yaśodā, Rohinī, Nanda, and the most powerful Balarāma, overcome with affection, embraced Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and showered their benedictions on Him. The Devas, Sāddhyas, Siddhas, Gandharvas and the Chāraṇas, being highly delighted, sang His praises in the heavens and showered flowers on Him. O Parīkṣit, the celestials in heaven sounded their conches and drums. Great Gandharvas like Tumburu began to sing songs describing His sweet sports. Then Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa started for Vraja, attended by His devoted friends, the cowherd boys, Śrī Balarāma marching by His side. And the charming Gopa women also returned to Vraja in great joy, singing of the wonderful exploits of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa like the uplifting of the Govardhana hill, etc., which touched them deeply in their heart and naturally enhanced their love. (29—33).

Chapter XXVI

CONVERSATION BETWEEN NANDA AND THE OTHER GOPAS ABOUT ŚRĪ KRŚNA

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit, the Gopas of Vraja seeing these wonderful exploits of Śrī Kṛṣṇa were very much astounded. Ignorant about the Lord's infinite power, they gathered together and talked among themselves as follows:—"All the deeds of this boy are extremely marvellous and supernatural. He ought not to have been born amidst such rustic people as we are ! This is certainly a matter about which one should be ashamed. As a huge elephant sportfully plucks a lotus and holds it up, even so this small child of seven years of age plucked the Govardhana hill from the earth and held it up with one hand continuously for seven days. This feat is quite impossible for an ordinary man. But let

alone this recent event; when He was a mere babe and the terrible giantess Pūtanā gave Him her breast He with closed eyes sucked her very life along with her milk, even as Time swallows up the span of one's life. One day, when He was but a babe of three months, He was placed beneath a loaded cart, and kicking up His legs into the air while crying, He hit the cart and overturned it. Was He not aged one year only, O brother, when He was carried away into the air by an Asura in the form of a whirlwind ? You all know that He killed that Asura, Trīṇavarta by name, by holding him tightly by the neck and smothering him. He was on one occasion tied to the husking-stand by His mother for stealing

butter. In that state, going on all fours, He passed between the two Arjuna trees and uprooted them by His own hands. On another occasion, while grazing calves in the forest in the company of Śrī Balarāma and the other cowherd boys He took hold with His hands of the bill of a demon, who had come to kill Him in the form of a crane, and tore the enemy to pieces. When a demon in the guise of a calf entered His herd of calves with the intent of killing Him, He playfully slew the former, and by throwing his body against the wood-apple trees broke the trees themselves. Accompanied by Śrī Balarāma He slew the demon in the form of a donkey with all his relations, and riding the forest of palm trees, full of ripe fruits, of fear brought it once more under man's use. He got the fierce demon, Pralamba, killed by the powerful Śrī Balarāma, and rescued the cows of Vraja as well as the Gopas from the forest fire. He punished and subdued the great poisonous snake Kāliya, and forcibly expelling it from the pool in the Jamuna made its water free of poison for all time. Moreover, Nanda ! all of us, residents of Vraja, feel that we have an irresistible attraction for this dark-complexioned boy, and He has also a natural affection for us. Can you tell us the reason for this ? For a boy of seven years to lift a huge hill and hold it up for seven days—how improbable, how wonderful is this ! O Lord of Vraja ! great is, therefore, our doubt in respect of your son. (1—14).

Sri Nanda said : O Gopas, listen to my words with attention and care. Do not entertain any doubt about my child. I shall confide to you what Maharsi Garga told me about this child. He said : "This child of yours incarnates in every age. In different Yugas He appeared in different forms, viz., white, red and yellow. This

time He has appeared in a dark complexion. He will be known as 'Kṛṣṇa' because of His dark complexion. O Nanda, this child of yours was previously born somewhere as the son of Vasudeva; therefore, the wise who know this secret call Him also as the glorious Vāsudeva (son of Vasudeva). Your son has many other names and forms; in fact, He has a name to denote every one of His qualities and deeds. I know all these names of His, but the ordinary men of the world do not know them. He will bring many a blessing to you and will delight all the Gopas and cows. With His help you will easily get over many an insuperable difficulty. O Lord of Vraja ! in a previous Yuga the earth was once left without a king, and the people were molested and plundered by robbers. It was your son who gave the virtuous people protection at the time, and with His help they vanquished the robbers. O Nanda ! I tell you frankly those who cherish love for this dark-complexioned child of yours are, indeed, blessed. Just as Devas who remain under the aegis and protection of Viṣṇu can never be conquered by Asuras, even so the lovers of this boy can never be vanquished by any internal or external enemies. O Nanda, from whatever point of view you may judge this boy—virtues, glory, beauty, fame or power--He is a compeer of Śrī Nārāyaṇa Himself. Therefore, His supernatural deeds should not cause you any wonder." O Gopas ! having instructed me thus in perfect confidence, Śrī Gargācharya left for his abode. Since then I have been regarding this boy, who is capable of doing everything without the least effort, as a part manifestation of Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa Himself. When the people of Vraja heard from the lips of Nanda the above account given by Garga, they got

over their sense of wonder, and rejoicing greatly they uttered praises both for Nanda and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (15—24).

When Indra, enraged at the interruption of his worship, sent down heavy showers, with strokes of lightning, hail-stones and tempestuous winds, the people of Vraja with their cows and women were greatly oppressed by them. Seeing the distress of

the people living under His own protection, the Lord took pity on them. And yet He smiled with the intention of enacting a new sport. Just as a small and feeble child playfully pulls out a mushroom, even so He pulled out with one hand the Govardhana hill and holding it up over the head protected the whole of Vraja. May the Lord Govinda, who thus shattered the pride of Indra, be gracious unto us! (25).

Chapter XXVII

ŚRĪ KṛṣṇA'S INSTALLATION

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parikṣit ! when uplifting the Govardhana hill Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa protected Vraja from the heavy showers, there came to Him Surabhi, the wish-yielding cow from Goloka and Indra, the lord of celestials, from heaven. Indra was extremely ashamed of his conduct in disregarding Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, approaching the Lord when He was all alone, He touched Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet with his crown glowing with jewels like the bright sun. Having heard of, and directly realized, the greatness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the possessor of infinite power, Indra's pride that he was the ruler of the three worlds left him. Joining his palms, He praised Śrī Kṛṣṇa as follows:— (1—3).

Indra said : O Lord ! You are essentially one supreme unruffled existence of pure, transcendental Sattva, the embodiment of perfect knowledge and wisdom, untouched by Rajas and Tamas. The creation appearing as a stream of Guṇas is a product of Māya. You remain wholly untouched by it. Because of ignorance about Your essential nature, You appear to people as being connected with it. When

You have no connection with Nescience, and products of Nescience like the



body, etc., can greed, anger and other evils, which are connected with the body, both as cause and effect, ever find any place in You ? O Lord ! the presence of these evils is an indication of Ignorance. Though You have no relation with Ignorance and its product, the world, yet You

come down on earth for the protection of the virtuous and suppression of the wicked, and thus either confer Your grace or mete out punishment. You are the Father, Teacher and Supreme Lord of the whole creation. You are inviolable Time that wields the rod of punishment. In order to fulfil the desires of Your devotees, You assume a personal form at Your own will and shatter the pride of those like me who consider themselves to be the rulers of the world, and carry on many other sports. O Lord ! ignorant souls like me, puffed up with the conceit of being rulers of the world, get cured of their pride and touch of haughtiness when they see You dauntless even in times of danger, and betaking themselves to the path of devotion followed by saints engage themselves whole-heartedly in the practice of Bhajana (adoration). O Lord ! each of Your acts is intended for the punishment and correction of the wicked. O Lord, intoxicated with the pride of wealth and power, I disregarded You. I was destitute of discretion and was ignorant of Your greatness; be pleased to forgive this ignorant fool and pray grant me the boon that I may not be the victim of such wicked ignorance again. O self-egregious Soul of souls, beyond the reach of the senses! the object of Your present descent on earth is to bring liberation, through destruction, to those Asura chiefs who live in the world to serve their own selfish ends and hence become a heavy burden to the earth, and to protect, and bring happiness to those who serve Your feet and are sincerely devoted to You. O Lord ! obeisance to You. You are the glorious Lord, who dwells in every heart; You are the All-soul, Vasudeva. You are the sole Lord of the Yadus, the only friend of Your devotee, and the attractor of all hearts. O Lord ! obeisance

to You, again and again. You have assumed this Form of Yours, not like Jivas under the influence of Karma, but out of Your own will and impelled by the desire of Your devotees. This Form of Yours is constituted of pure consciousness. You are everything, You are the cause of everything, the indwelling soul of all. I offer You my obeisance, again and again. O Lord, my pride is inordinate and my anger is beyond my control. When I found that my worship had been interfered with, I sought the destruction of Gokula by means of heavy showers and tempestuous winds. But, O Lord, You have shown the greatest favour to me. Having failed in my attempt, my pride is now completely crushed. You are my Supreme Ruler, my teacher, my very soul; I seek protection under You. (4—13).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit! when Indra, the chief of celestials, offered praises to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in these words the Lord smiled, and addressing Indra in a voice as deep as thunder spoke as follows. (14).

Bhagavan Sri Krsna said: O Indra ! you were getting intoxicated with your power and position; therefore, as a mark of My favour on you I interrupted your sacrifice, so that you may now constantly remember Me. People blinded with the pride of wealth and power do not see that I, in the form of Death, follow them with the rod of punishment in my hand. He on whom I seek to confer My grace, I divest him of all his power and affluence. Indra, may you be happy; return to your celestial kingdom, and follow My commandments. No longer entertain any pride in your heart. Try to realize constantly My presence, and carefully discharge the duties which have fallen to your lot by virtue of your position and office. (15—17).

Parīkṣit ! when the Lord was thus pronouncing His directions, the wise Surabhi, the wish-yielding Cow with all her kith and kin, offered her obeisances to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord of creation, appearing in the garb of a cowherd, and addressing Him said. (18).

The Kamadhenu said: O Kṛṣṇa, the Embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss ! You are the greatest Master of Yoga. You are the Universe itself, as well as the supreme cause of the Universe. Though the cause of creation, You are not Yourself subject to change, but always exist in one state of Being; therefore, You are Achyuta, the Imperishable and Fixed. Indra attempted to kill us, the cows of Vraja; but You, the protector of the Universe, saved us from his wrath. We are now blessed with a Lord and protector in You. You are, no doubt, the Lord of the world; but to us You are a special object of worship, our sole Deity. Indra may be an Indra so far as the universe is concerned, he may rule over the three worlds (heaven, earth and the nether world); but it is You who are our Indra. Therefore, for the protection of the cows, Brahmans, celestials and the virtuous, accept the position of Indra. Under the direction of Brahmā we, cows, shall install You as our Indra. O Soul of the Universe, You have appeared on earth in order to relieve it of its burden. (19—21).

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parīkṣit ! having thus spoken to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Cow

Kamadhenu bathed Him with her own milk; while Indra, together with the celestial sages, and requested by the mothers of the celestials, bathed Him with the waters of the heavenly Ganges brought by Airāvata in its trunk. Thus performing His installation ceremony, they addressed Bhagavan Śrī Kṛṣṇa as 'Govinda'. Nārada, Tumburu and the other Ṛsis, Gandharvas, Vidyādharaś, Siddhas and Chāraṇas were all present there on this occasion. They began to sing the glories of the Lord, which sanctified the whole world. The celestial damsels began to dance in ecstasy. The principal gods hailed Him with praises and showered on Him wonderful celestial flowers. A flood of delight filled all the three worlds and milk dropping automatically from the udders of the cows made the earth clammy. The rivers flowed with milk and butter, the trees began to drop honey. The earth yielded a rich harvest of crops without being ploughed and cultivated. Precious jewels hidden within the bowels of mountains came out of their own accord and began to shed their lustre. O Parīkṣit ! when Śrī Kṛṣṇa was installed, even animals cruel by nature shed their enmity and made friends with one another. Having thus performed the installation ceremony of Śrī Govinda, the Lord and Protector of cows and of Gokula, Indra obtained the permission of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and left for his heavenly abode along with all Devas, Gandharvas and others. (22—28).

Chapter XXVIII

THE PATRIARCH NANDA REDEEMED FROM VARUNA'S CUSTODY

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parīkṣit, Nanda kept fast on the eleventh lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month of Kārtika and worshipped God. The twelfth

lunar day having started the same night, he entered the Jamuna at dead of night for performing ablutions, unaware that it was an hour favourable to the Asuras. An

Asura, a servant of Varuṇa, seized him at the time and took him to the presence of Varuṇa. Missing Nanda, the cowherds of Vraja began to weep and wail. "O Kṛṣṇa, You alone can rescue your father; O Balarāma, You are our only hope in this calamity!"—this was what they repeated. Bhagavān Śri Kṛṣṇa, the all-powerful Lord, always affords protection to His dependants. Hearing the lamentations of the people of Vraja, He at once came to know that Nanda had been carried away by a servant of Varuṇa. He, therefore, went to Varuṇa's abode in search of His father. When the guardian deity of the waters, Varuṇa, saw that the Lord of the external and internal senses, Bhagavān Śri Kṛṣṇa Himself, had come to his abode he greatly rejoiced at it and offered the Lord worship on a grand scale. Addressing the Lord, he said. (1—4).

Varuna said: O Lord ! My birth has achieved its purpose, I am truly blessed today; for I have gained the privilege of serving Your feet. O Lord, he who gains this privilege crosses the ocean of existence. I offer my obeisances to Your feet. O Lord, You are the one unqualified and immutable existence beyond all diversity. You are the perfect Paramātmā, the support of Prakṛti and of all objects in Prakṛti, the repository of infinite sweetness, beauty, glory and all other divine virtues. Māyā, which by her mere mental projection brings forth all the different worlds, has no place in You. I bow to Your feet. O Lord, this servant of mine is an ignorant fool. Not knowing his duty, he has brought Your father to me. Pray, forgive him his fault. O Govinda ! I know that You have deep affection for Your father. He is here, please take him back with You. O Lord ! You are the indwelling soul of all, You are the witness of all hearts. O Śri Kṛṣṇa, the Enchanter of

the Universe, pray bless this servant of Yours, and accept him as Your own. (5—8).

Sri Sukadeva said: Parīkṣit, Bhagavān

Śri Kṛṣṇa is the ruler of even lords of the universe like Brahmā. Varuṇa, the guardian deity of the waters, having thus propitiated Him with words of praise, the Lord returned to Vraja taking His father with Him, bringing great delight to His kith and kin in Vraja. In the abode of Varuṇa, Nanda saw the wealth and grandeur of that guardian deity, beyond the range of mortal sense; he saw the residents of that region making their submissions to Śri Kṛṣṇa and humbly bowing before Him. All this astonished him greatly. Returning to Vraja, he related all the incidents to his people. O Parīkṣit, with a wondering mind the Gopas now began to believe that Śri Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Lord of the Universe Himself. Hearing from Nanda of the grandeur of the region of Varuṇa, they thought that the grandeur of the Abode of the Supreme Lord Himself, to whom Varuṇa offered his obeisances, must be infinitely greater. They eagerly thought within their mind: 'Will Bhagavān Śri Kṛṣṇa grant us the privilege of a sight of His Abode beyond Māyā, where only His beloved devotees are permitted to enter ?' Parīkṣit ! the omniscient Lord Śri Kṛṣṇa perceived the desire in the heart of His people, and with a view to fulfil the same graciously thought within Himself: "In this world creatures due to their ignorance identify their self with the body, entertain desires of various kinds and engage themselves in numerous forms of activities for the satisfaction of those desires. Then, as the result of their actions they pass through and wander amidst many higher or lower species of beings, e.g., celestials, men, beasts, birds, etc. But they do not know what is

the real goal of their life—what is their real self. These relations of Mine, the people of Vraja, do not belong to this category. Having devoted themselves to My service, they have become so absorbed in it that they have lost all consciousness of their self." Reflecting thus the glorious Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in overwhelming mercy, granted the Gopas a vision of His Abode in the transcendent region, beyond the realm of Māyā. This Supreme Divine Abode of God is revealed only to those men of wisdom who have realized Brahma. Therefore, first of all the Lord allowed them a vision of Brahma, which is of the nature of Truth, the embodiment of consciousness, infinite, eternal and self-

luminous, which is realized only by the wise who have transcended Māyā and are absorbed in Samādhi. Parīkṣit ! the Lord took the Gopas to Brahmahrada (the Lake of Brahma), the very embodiment of Brahma, where He showed His divine form to Akrūra later. The Gopas entered the lake and took their plunge. Then the Lord brought them out of the lake and showed them His Supreme Abode. Obtaining a vision of that Divine region, Nanda and the other Gopas found themselves merged in an ocean of Bliss. They saw there the Vedas in personal forms offering their praises to, and singing the glories of, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The sight filled them all with astonishment. (9-17).

Chapter XXIX

COMMENCEMENT OF THE RĀSA DANCE

Sri Sukadeva said: Parīkṣit ! it was the autumn season. Flowers like jasmine blossomed even untimely and diffused their fragrance. The nights referred to by the Lord at the time of the stealing of Gopīs' clothes, all joined together and appeared as one delightful night. The Lord saw it, and made it divine. What the Gopīs had been long craving for, the Lord now desired, with the help of the inconceivable power of Yogamāyā, and through the instrumentality of the Gopīs, to play that Rāsa-dance, which is expressive of perfect sweetness. Although devoid of mind, He improvised a mind in order to fulfil the desire of His devoted lovers. At the mere thought of the Lord, the Moon came forth painting the face of the East with a ruddy glow by the brush of his soothing rays, even as a loving and prudent husband meeting his beloved wife after a long separation may paint her

face with pigment and delight her heart. The rise of the Moon not only delighted the East, but mitigated the suffering of all creatures scorched by the burning rays of the autumnal sun. The circle of the Moon was complete that night, for it was a full-moon night. With a hue as red as fresh saffron, the Moon appeared bashful with some desire hidden in his heart. Seeing him thus rising with a face as beautiful as the face of Lakṣmī, and the whole forest being lit up by his gentle rays, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa sounded a sweet enchanting note on His flute, which at once stole the heart of the Gopīs. This note of the flute kindles the fire of Divine Love, and enhances the desire to meet God. The hearts of the Gopīs had been already captivated by the beautiful Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Now all the different faculties of their mind—sense of fear, shyness, self-restraint, sense of propriety,

etc.,—were forced to suspend their functions. As soon as they heard the note of the flute,



their condition became quite odd and peculiar. Without even informing the friends with whom jointly they performed austerities in order to gain Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their husband, and unperceived by one another, they left their homes to meet their beloved Lord. They walked in such haste and with such quick steps that their earrings began to rock to and fro. (1-4).

When they heard the note of the flute those among them who were milking their cows, in their eagerness, left their milking and started off at once. Those who were boiling milk left the milk on the fire. Those who were cooking pottage left the soup on the oven. Those who were serving food left off serving. Some of them, who were suckling their children, put the children aside; some waiting on their husbands suddenly broke away, and some others partaking of food left off their food and started to meet Śrī

Kṛṣṇa. When the note of the flute reached their ears some of the Gopīs were painting their bodies with sandal paste and other pigments, some were bathing and some were applying collyrium to their eyes. They at once left off their respective work and hastened to meet Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They



were not conscious whether they had dressed themselves properly, whether their ornaments had been put on in their proper places. Dressing themselves somehow in a disorderly way all of them eagerly repaired to the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When they were thus leaving for Śrī Kṛṣṇa renouncing all works connected with the fourfold object of life—viz., Artha (worldly prosperity), Dharma (religious merit), Kāma (enjoyments of life) and Mokṣa (liberation), they were prohibited and obstructed by their husbands, parents, brothers and other relations. But they were going as if in a trance, their mind being drawn away by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Enchanter of the Universe; they could not, therefore, be obstructed or diverted from their course. Parikṣit ! when the flute

sounded, some of the Gopīs who were in the inner apartments were so enraptured and overwhelmed with love that they could not find the passage to go out, or were shut up by their relatives and friends. Unable to leave they closed their eyes, and got absorbed in contemplation of the Lord's beauty and sweetness and in the meditation of His wonderful deeds. Parīkṣit ! the last traces of their evil Karma were burnt up by the intense fire of separation from their most Beloved Lord. The eradication of evil made the meditation perfect. In meditation they saw Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed before them. In contemplation they enjoyed the intense delight of embracing the Lord. They derived so much joy, so much peace of mind, from this embrace that their auspicious Karma too got attenuated thereby. Parīkṣit ! their attitude towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not the same as towards God ; they looked upon Him as a paramour. But whatever the attitude, the truth is not thereby affected. He whom they embraced in meditation, whatever may have been their attitude, was the Paramātmā Himself. Therefore, they at once cast off the body, consisting of the three Guṇas, attained by them as the effect of their two categories of Karma known as virtue and vice, and gained the transcendent body qualified to participate in the Divine Sport. The earthly bondage suffered by the gross body was sundered in their case even when they saw the Lord in their meditation. (5—11).

King Parīkṣit said : Holy sir, the Gopīs looked upon Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their dearest friend, and did not identify Him with Brahma. Their attraction for Him appeared to be based upon the qualities of Nature. Under the circumstances, how was the stream of Guṇas cut off in their case leading to the cessation of Saṃsāra ? (12).

Sri Sukadeva said : Parīkṣit ! it has already been explained to you how Śiśupāla, who hated the Lord, attained the transcendent body of a divine associate when his gross, material body came to the end of its allotted course. Then, what wonder that the Gopīs should attain Him—Gopīs who so intensely loved Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord existing above Prakṛti and beyond the reach of the qualities of Nature ? Parīkṣit ! the Lord is free from modifications; He is beyond all measure and proof, the repository of inconceivable transcendent Guṇas, far above the range of the three Guṇas of Prakṛti, of which He is the controller. He manifests Himself and His sports in the world only for the supreme good of men. What one should do, therefore, is to establish a relationship with Him, to entertain some feeling towards Him—that feeling may be one of love, anger or fear; the relation may be one of affection, kinship or of friendliness. Whatever the feeling, when the mind is constantly fixed on Him, it is bound to lose itself in God. Parīkṣit ! a devotee like you should entertain no such doubt with regard to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. There is no wonder that it should be so in the case of the glorious Unborn, the Lord of even the masters of Yoga. Parīkṣit, a mere thought-wave arising in Him, a mere gesture of His eyebrows may bring salvation to the whole world, to speak nothing of the Gopīs ! Let us now proceed with our story. When the glorious Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw that the women of Vraja had approached very near Him, the foremost among those skilled in speech spoke to them in words which really gave an exhibition of His enchanting power of speech. (13—17).

Bhagavan Sri Krsna said : O highly blessed Gopīs ! welcome to you all. Tell

Me what I should do to please you. I hope all is well in Vraja. Please tell Me what brings you here at this late hour. O beautiful ones! nights are generally very dismal and dreary; ferocious animals roam about here and there. Therefore, all of you should return to Vraja as soon as possible. You should not stay here at night. Your mothers, fathers, sons, brothers and husbands must be missing you and looking for you. It is no use causing them unnecessary vexation and worry. Maybe you have come here to see the charming forest laden with beautiful flowers of various colours. This is but natural. It is, indeed, an enchanting forest made resplendent with the rays of the full moon and beautiful with tender shoots of trees waving before the sportful breeze of the Jamuna, in whose waters they are reflected. You have seen all this; therefore, do you return to Vraja as soon as possible. Do not tarry. You are all noble and virtuous ladies; go and serve your husbands as their true wives. Do you bear no affection in your heart? Your children are crying, the calves are lowing for milk. Go, suckle the children and milk the cows. Or, if you feel that your mind and heart are fastened on Me through affection and, therefore, you have come here, there is nothing unnatural or unbecoming in this. For all creatures in the world, even the ordinary birds and beasts, love Me, and feel delighted when they see Me. But, O blessed Gopis, the supreme duty of a woman is to wait upon and sincerely serve her husband and the relations of the husband and tend and nourish the children. A woman longing for a better life in a higher region should never abandon the husband, unless he is a fallen man, however ill-tempered, unlucky, advanced in age, dull-witted, ill or indigent he may be. For a woman born in a noble

family, it is most detestable to resort to a paramour. It takes away the hope of a happy life in the other world, admission to heaven is denied to her, and she earns infamy in her present birth. The ignoble and base pleasure derived from such illicit love is quite momentary in character; it brings nothing but misery and horror in its wake. It not only closes the gate to Mokṣa, but causes fear by opening the deep chasm of hell. O Gopis! if you have come with the object of gaining exclusive, undivided Love for Me, then know that this is gained by hearing of My virtues and deeds, by seeing My Form and contemplating on Me, and by singing My glories, and never by physical proximity to Me. Therefore, please return to your respective homes. (18—27).

Sri Sukadeva said: Parīkṣit! when the Gopis heard Śrī Kṛṣṇa speak what was most unwelcome to them, they grew despondent and disconsolate and were plunged in deep sorrow. With their faces cast down through dejection, their ruddy lips dried up by deep sighs of grief, scratching the ground with their toes, and with the saffron on their breasts washed down by tears mixed with collyrium, they stood silent with their heart full of sorrow. For Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sake they had renounced every other desire. They were deeply attached to Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the dearest object of their love and affection. When they heard Him speak those cruel words, they grew somewhat indignant and rubbing the tears off their eyes, which had grown red through an excessive flow of tears, they spoke to Him in a choked voice and faltering accents. (28—30).

The Gopis said: O Beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa! You know the inmost secrets of our heart. It does not befit You to speak so cruelly to us, who have abandoned the whole world

for Your sake, whose heart is solely devoted to the dust of Your sacred feet. We know You are both free and self-willed. We can exercise no control over You. And yet please accept us, Your devoted servants, even as Lord Nārāyaṇa accepts His devotees. Pray do not abandon us. O beloved Lord ! You know the secret of all Dharma. You are quite right when You say that the natural duty of women lies in being true, obedient and useful to their husbands, children, relatives and friends. But this instruction inspires us to offer You our devotion all the more. For You are God Himself. Let all the affection that we should have for our husbands and children be transferred to You; for You are the dearest friend, the soul and the most beloved object of all embodied beings. O dearest Lord ! those who truly know You and their own self, offer their love to You and You alone. For everything else than You is transient, and brings nothing but sorrow. The same is true of our husbands, children and others. But You are the eternally Beloved Ātmā; therefore the wise cultivate relationship with You, and not with others. O Supreme Lord, pray shower Your grace on us. Your beautiful eyes are as soft as the lotus full of love. Pray do not shatter our long-cherished hope and drive us away from Your feet. O enchanter of our heart ! our heart was so long centred in our homes-teds and our hands were busy with the performance of household duties. But now You have stolen that heart. Being the very embodiment of Bliss, You have done so without any effort on Your part. Our feet cannot move even a single step away from You. How, then, shall we go back to Vraja, and going there what shall we do ? O Lord, O dearest friend ! with

the flood of nectar of Your lips put out the fire of love that has been kindled in our heart by Your sweet smiles, loving glances and enchanting music. If not, we shall allow the fire of separation to consume our body, and shall attain You through meditation. (31—35).

O Lord with lotus-like eyes ! O jewel of life ! You are the most beloved of all dwellers of the forest; You, too, love them and mostly dwell with them. We have the rare good fortune to touch Your feet, which Śrī Lakṣmī Herself is allowed to serve but occasionally. The day we gained this privilege You delighted us by accepting us as Your servitors. Since then it has become impossible for us to stand before any other even for a moment, to say nothing of serving our husbands and children. Śrī Lakṣmī, for whose gracious looks all other gods perform the severest austerities, even though possessing an unrivalled place on Your bosom, nevertheless covets with Tulasī the dust of Your sacred feet, sought after and worshipped by all Your devotees and servants. We have similarly taken shelter under the dust of Your feet. O Lord, be propitious to us. You have up to now relieved the misery of those who have taken shelter under Your feet. Grant us the privilege of Your service. With the one object of waiting on You, we have abandoned our homes and our relations. O dear and perfect Lord, we have no opportunity to serve and worship You there. O jewel of men, we are sore afflicted by the intense fire of love awakened by Your charming smiles and enchanting looks. O Lord ! looking on Your face overhung with curly locks, with cheeks brilliant with charming ear-rings, with lips overflowing with nectar, and full of enchanting smiles, and with endearing looks; looking on

Your two arms, which afford protection to those who take refuge in You; and looking on Your wide bosom, which is the permanent abode of Śrī Lakṣmī, the repository of all beauty, we have surrendered ourselves to You and become Your slaves. O beloved Lord, what woman is there in all the three worlds, who on hearing Your sweet songs and the ravishing airs of Your flute, and on seeing Your most bewitching Form,—an infinitesimal fraction of whose beauty makes up all the beauty of the three worlds, and whose sight makes even dumb creatures like the cows, birds, trees and deer—stand enchanted bristling with joy, will not be drawn away from the approved path recognized as noble in society, and throwing away all decorum will not attach herself wholly to You? We know that just as Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa protects the celestial world, even so You have revealed Yourself for allaying the fears and afflictions of Vraja. We know, again, that You are specially kind to those who are distressed and tormented. O Beloved Lord, we are suffering from great agony. The desire to meet You, like a strong flame, is burning our heart. Make us Your own by placing Your soft, lotus-like hand on the bosom and head of these slaves of Yours. (36—41).

Sri Sukadeva said: Parikṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Krṣṇa is the Lord of Yogis like Sanaka, etc., and the Supreme Lord of the Masters of Yoga like Śiva and others. On hearing the pitiful prayers of the Gopīs, He was moved by compassion for them; and even though He takes delight only in the Self, though He is self-contained as far as delight is concerned, and has not to depend on any

external object for the same, He smiled and granted them the joy of sporting with Him. The Gopīs gathered round Him, and the Lord placed Himself wholly at their disposal. But all the while He remained Achyuta, that is, fixed in the Self and unshakable from it. When He laughed heartily, His bright white teeth shone like jasmine-buds. His loving glances and pleasing sight brightened the countenances of the Gopīs, amidst whom the Lord looked like the Moon surrounded by stars. Adorned with the necklace called Vaijayanti, Bhagavān Śrī Krṣṇa, the leader of hundreds of groups of Gopīs, roamed about with them adding grace to the woods of Brindaban. Now the Gopīs sang of the virtues and sports of their Beloved Śrī Krṣṇa, and now Śrī Krṣṇa sang of the beauty and love of the Gopīs. Then the Lord came to the cool and spotless sands of the river, which looked as fine particles of refined camphor. Breezes were blowing joyously from the waves of the Jamuna, charged with the fragrance of lilies. On that beautiful sandy bank of the river, the Lord sported with the Gopīs. By stretching His arms, by pressing their hands, by touching their locks, thighs, loin-cloth and breasts, by cutting jokes and making scratches on their person with His nails, by loving embraces, sportive glances and enchanting smiles and similar other playful acts, He awakened the Divinely transcendent, the purest form of love in the heart of the Gopīs and gave them delight. When Bhagavān Śrī Krṣṇa, the most generous, the all-pervading and Almighty Lord, thus honoured the Gopīs by sporting

with them, they grew somewhat proud and began to feel that they were superior to all women in the world, that there was no woman who could match them. Perceiving that the privilege He had conferred

on them had tickled their vanity and made them a little proud, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly disappeared from their midst to curb their pride and to bless them as well. (42—48).

Chapter XXX

CONDITION OF THE GOPIS IN ŚRĪ KRṢNA'S ABSENCE

Sri Sukadeva said : Parikṣit, the glorious Lord suddenly disappeared from the scene. Distressed at not finding Him in their midst, the damsels of Vraja were reduced to the condition of she-elephants missing the leader of the herd. Their heart began to burn in the fire of separation. Their mind became absorbed in the remembrance of His graceful gait, amorous glances, delightful conversations, the different kinds of sports and frolics in which He indulged in order to raise their love to its highest pitch. The love-intoxicated Gopis became as if possessed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa and began to act like Him in various ways. The beloved Gopis became so many images, as it were, of their dearest Śrī Kṛṣṇa so far as their gait, smiles, looks and manner of talking were concerned; they exhibited in themselves the deportment and graceful activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and identifying themselves wholly with Him began to say to one another "I am Kṛṣṇa." Thus they entirely lost themselves in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Singing loudly in chorus of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they went about from one grove to another, from one thicket to another, searching for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Parikṣit Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not far from them. Like ether He is present in all creatures and in all objects, both within and without them. He was present in that very place, He was within them; and yet failing to find Him,

the Gopis began to ask the trees about Him. (1—4).

Parikṣit, the Gopis first approached the large trees. "O Aśvattha ! O Plakṣa ! O Nyagrodha ! have you seen Nanda's darling, who has stolen away our heart by means of His endearing smiles and glances ?" They expected that the large trees would give them some clue to the whereabouts of their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa; but finding them making no reply, they advanced and asked the other trees—"O Kurabaka ! O Aśoka ! O Nāga ! O Punnāga ! O Champaka ! did Balarāma's younger brother, whose very smiles put down the pride and appease the anger of the proudest and most jealous women, go this way ?" Finding them silent, they now approached the more tender plants. "O Tulasī, O blessed one, you are very tender-hearted and wish well of all; you are intensely attached to the feet of the Lord and the Lord also loves you. He wears you round His neck as a garland, though the bees may swarm and hum round Him, and never puts you by. Did you see your beloved Blue-coloured Enchanter ?" But the Gopis thought the Tulasī was proud of her position as the beloved consort of the Lord. So leaving her they approached other trees of the female class, who were of the same position as themselves. "O Mālatī, O Mallikā, O Jati, O Jūthikā, have you seen our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa passing this way ?

It appears He has gladdened you with the touch of His hand." Failing to get any



reply from them, they turned to the fruit-bearing trees, whose function is to serve others. Addressing the Mango, Priyāla, the Breadfruit, Asana, Kovidāra, Jambū, Arka, Aśoka, Bilva, Bakula, Rasala, Kadamba, Nipa and other trees they said: "O happy trees growing by the side of the Jamuna, you live only for the benefit of others. Bereft of Kṛṣṇa our life has become a great void, we are falling into a swoon. Please show us the way, so that we may find Him." When the trees made no reply, they turned to the earth. "O Earth, the beloved consort of the Lord, what great austerities did you perform that you are rejoicing at the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet and expressing your horripilation through the waving blades of grass and creepers. Do you express this joy because Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet touched you now, or because He measured you with His feet when He incarnated as Vāmarā, or because He embraced you in His incarnation as

the Divine Boar?" But they were disappointed even with the earth. Then, seeing a doe, they approached her for a message about Śrī Kṛṣṇa. "O friend, O dear doe, a stream of sweetness flows from every limb of our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Did He pass this way, giving joy to your eyes, with His sweetheart beside Him? It seems He did so; for here you have the fragrance of our Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's garland of Kunda flowers made sweeter with the odour of saffron on the bosom of His lady-love clasped in His embrace." Then, turning again to the trees, they said: "O trees, the Tulasi in His garland has such a charming smell that the bees get intoxicated with it, and follow it humming wherever He goes. He is perhaps holding a lotus in one hand and resting the other arm on the shoulder of His beloved. He must have gone this way. It seems you bowed low to offer your prostrations to Him. Did He acknowledge your prostrations even by a loving glance?" Then, turning to the other side, they said: "O friends, it is idle to question the trees. Come, let us approach the creepers. Though they hold in their embrace the extended arms of their lords, the trees, that does not matter. It seems they were touched by the finger-tips of our Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa; that is why they are bristling with joy. Oh, how great is their fortune!" (5-13).

Parikṣit! thus raving like lunatics, the Gopis got bewildered in their anxious search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Then, entering a still deeper stage of Divine Love, they fully identified themselves with Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and began to imitate the various playful ways of the Lord. One of them acted as Pūtanā, while another playing the part of Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to suck her breast. One identified herself with a cart, while another crying as infant Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave a kick with

one foot and overturned the cart. One Gopī personated the child Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while another playing the role of Triṇavarta carried the child away. One Gopī began to crawl like a babe dragging her feet, whose anklets made sweet tinkling sounds. One Gopī acted as Śrī Kṛṣṇa and another as Śrī Balarāma, while many others personated the cowherd boys. One took up the role of Vatsasura, and another that of Bakasura; while two more personated Śrī Kṛṣṇa and imitated the sport of slaying those two demons. One Gopī imitating Śrī Kṛṣṇa tending the cows in the forest began to shout calling the distant cows by their names, and played as it were upon the flute. Other Gopīs applauded her with ejaculations of "Well done, well done!" One Gopī absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa placed her arm on the shoulders of another, and strolling like Him said, "See, friends, I am Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Look, how graceful is my gait!"



Another Gopī taking up Śrī Kṛṣṇa's role said, "O people of Vraja, don't you be afraid of this rain and storm. See, I am provid-

ing you with shelter". Saying this she imitated the act of uplifting the Govardhana hill, and in place of the hill lifted up her upper cloth with one hand. Parikṣit! one Gopī acted as the serpent Kaliya, while another taking up Śrī Kṛṣṇa's role mounted on her head, and trampling it under her feet said: "O wicked serpent, get away from this place. Know that I am born here as the chastiser of the wicked." That very moment one Gopī shouted, "Lo, a terrible wild fire has broken out over there. All of you close your eyes at once. I shall deliver you from the clutches of this fire." One Gopī personated Yaśodā and tied another, who acted as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as if to a husking-stand with a garland of flowers. The Gopī acting as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as if frightened, covered her face with her palms and began to tremble like one in fear. (14-23).

Parikṣit! thus imitating the sports of the Lord the Gopīs again began to ask the trees and creepers of Brindaban the whereabouts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when they noticed the footprints of the Lord in a certain part of the forest. Thereupon they began to talk among themselves: "Certainly these are the footprints of our Enchanter, the Darling of Nanda, the Crest-jewel of all gracious souls. For they clearly show the marks of a banner, lotus, thunderbolt, goad, barley-seed, etc." Following the track of the footprints they advanced with a view to discover Him, when side by side with those footprints they noticed the footprints of a damsel and began to feel extremely sore at heart. They observed to one another: "Who is this girl, who has gone resting her arm on the shoulder of the Darling of Nanda, as a she-elephant goes with her lover, the chief of elephants. Certainly, the Almighty Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa must have been specially propitiated by her; that is why the Lord

has taken her apart, leaving us all behind. O friends, even the particle of dust touched



by the lotus feet of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa becomes highly blessed; for even Brahmā, Śankara and Goddess Lakṣmī wear it on their crowns for absolution from evil." Another Gopī said: "But, friends! whatever that may be, these footprints of the girl who has taken away Śrī Kṛṣṇa with her, and is alone enjoying the nectar of His lips in seclusion, greatly pain our heart." Advancing a little further, they said—"Look, the footprints of the girl are not to be found here. Perhaps the beloved Lord lifted up His sweetheart seeing that her tender feet were pricked by the pointed blades of grass. This is further borne out by the fact that the impressions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet are deeper here, which shows that He walked here under a heavy load. Surely the love-stricken Lord must have borne the girl on His shoulders here. O friends, how blessed must be she! With what deep ties of love she must have bound the Lord to her! He seems to be anxious to carry out all her

behests; whereas we, forlorn women, are searching for Him in the forest thirsting even for His sight. Here, it appears, He set her down for the sake of flowers; and here the beloved Lord gathered flowers for His lady-love. See, how the feet are but partly imprinted where He stood on tiptoe to pluck flowers. Here beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, like a man under the influence of lust, seems to have combed the hair of His lady-love, and here He must have sat down to decorate her braid with flowers." O Parīkṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa delights only in the Self. He is gratified with His own Self and is perfect in Himself. He being One and indivisible, there being no duality so far as He is concerned, how can ordinary lust or carnality be ascribed to Him? Yet the Perfect Lord sported with that girl merely to demonstrate to the world how wretched is the state of a lustful person, and how wicked is women's heart. (24—35).

The Gopīs thus wandered from forest to forest like so many intoxicated women, showing the footprints of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to one another. Now, the fortunate Gopī whom Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa had singled out for special favour, and had taken away with Him leaving other Gopīs behind, began to regard herself as superior to all other Gopīs. She thought the beloved Lord showed preference to her and her alone ignoring other Gopīs, who loved Him so much. O Parīkṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the humbler of the pride of even Brahmā and Śankara. The Gopī touched with pride of her love and rare good fortune, said to Him in the heart of the forest: "O Beloved ! I am tired and can walk no longer, please carry me whithersoever You want to take me." Hearing this Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied, "Well, dear, then mount on My shoulder." As soon as the Gopī attempted to mount on Him He

vanished, leaving her wailing over her lot and deeply merged in grief. "O Lord, O Love, O most Beloved," she cried in distress, "where are You, O long-armed one, where have You gone ? O friend ! please bless me with Your presence, I am Your helpless servant." Parikṣit, the other Gopīs following the track of the footprints of the Lord reached this spot and saw that at no great distance from them their companion forsaken by the Lord lay there disconsolate and stunned by the shock of intense grief. Bringing her back to her senses with some effort they heard from her how she enjoyed the special favour of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; but she added, "O friends, through my own wickedness I insulted Him; therefore He has vanished, leaving me all alone." The Gopīs were highly astonished when they heard this from her lips. (36—41).

Seeking the Lord in the forest they advanced till the rays of the moon made things perceptible, and retraced their steps when they found nothing but dense darkness in front of them. O Parikṣit, the mind of the Gopīs had become full of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They talked of Him and Him alone. Their bodies made movements in imitation of His sportful activities and acted as His own vehicles. They represented Śrī Kṛṣṇa

through every pore of their being. Forgetting themselves, they sang only of His ex-



cellent qualities and sports. In that state, the thought of their homes never crossed their minds. They yearned for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's return from the very depth of their soul. Thus deeply merged in the contemplation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Gopīs returned to the sands in the bed of the Jamuna and began to sing in chorus about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's virtues and qualities. (42—44).

Chapter XXXI

THE GOPIS' SONG

Overwhelmed with grief at their separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Gopīs began to sing as follows.

The Gopis said : O Beloved! By Your birth the position of Vraja has been exalted, it has become superior even to regions like Vaikuṇṭha. That is why the Goddess of wealth and beauty, Lakṣmī, has begun to

abide here constantly, leaving Her original abode, Vaikuṇṭha. Pray reveal Yourself before us. We, Your creatures, who live only for You, are wandering here and there seeking You in every direction. O Lord, the Bestower of Supreme Enjoyment ! O giver of boons ! we are Your gratuitous servants. Is this really no

killing when You disappoint us after piercing our heart with the shaft of Your eyes, which throw into shade the splendour of an autumnal lotus in full bloom in a large sheet of crystal water ? O Best of men, You protected us, again and again, from all sources of fear,—from the perils of the poisonous water of the Jamuna; from the demon Agha, who came to devour us in the guise of a serpent; from rain, storm, lightning, thunder and wild fire; from demons like Ariṣṭa and Vyomāsura. Did You do all this to earn the reputation of killing us with Your own hand ? We know that You are not only the darling of Yaśodā, but are the witness in the heart of all creatures possessing bodies. We are aware that You have come down on earth and taken birth in the line of Yadu on Brahmā's prayer for the protection of the world. But, O beloved, You are our Friend; why burn us in the fire of Your separation ? (1—4).

O Jewel of the Yadu race ! when people afraid of the constant revolution between birth and death take refuge at Your lotus feet You make them fearless by taking them under the shelter of Your gracious palm, with which You espoused the hand of Śrī, the Goddess of Prosperity; O Beloved, the bestower of all desires, please place that palm on our head. O Hero ! O the allayer of affliction of the people of Vraja ! seeing us elated with pride for enjoying Your special favour, what was the need for You to disappear from our midst ? Your very smile is sufficient to put down all our pride. O Friend ! we are Your servants, please accept us and show us, poor women, Your charming lotus-like face. Your lotus-like feet drive away the sin of those who take refuge under You; they are the source of all beauty and sweetness, and are being constantly served by Lakṣmī,

the Goddess of Prosperity. But they are easily accessible to us, the people of Vraja. With those very feet You follow our cows and calves when they go out for grazing ; for our sake You did not hesitate to place those feet on the hood of the fearful serpent Kāliya. Pray place them on our bosom and remove the burning of our heart. O lotus-eyed Lord, Your sweet accents and charming speech are most delightful to the ear. Even the greatest men of wisdom get absorbed and feel themselves lost in them. Tasting the nectar of Your speech we, Your bond slaves, are all enchanted and beside ourselves. O Lord ! infuse life into us by allowing us to drink the nectar of Your lips, which is sweeter than even the nectar of Your speech. The nectarine stories of Your deeds are the very life of those who suffer the pangs of Your separation. The greatest saints have sung their praises. They are the surest cure of all forms of sin and confer blessings on those who hear them. They are most soothing, brightening and very extensive. Those who sing them perform the greatest act of charity on earth. O deceitful one, O beloved ! Your hearty laugh, Your loving looks, Your captivating sports, most delightful to contemplate on, Your promises of love in private, all are most sweet and have gone deeply into our heart, which is breaking due to Your separation. (5—10).

O Lord, O Beloved, Your feet are as tender, as delicate as the lotus; when You go out of Vraja to graze the cows, we feel troubled at heart to think that they may be hurt by hard gravel and pointed grass. O heroic Lord ! at the decline of the day when You return to Vraja, we see You often with Your lotus-like face overhung with dark curly hair and bedimmed with dust. Your sight, then, kindles the fire of love in our heart

and rouses the desire to meet You. O allayer of agony, Your lotus-like feet fulfil the desires of those who bow to them; they are worshipped by Lakṣmī Herself, the Goddess of Prosperity; they are ornaments of the earth and fit to be contemplated in times of adversity. Pray place those most blessed feet on our bosom and bring solace to our heart. O Chief of Heroes! pray vouchsafe to us the nectar of Your lips, which enhances the joy of love and roots out sorrows; which the flute, full of Your music, enjoys in full measure; and which makes men forget every other form of attachment. When You go away to the forest during the day, a moment appears to us like an age without Your sight; and when during your return in the evening we see Your bewitching face graced with ringlets of hair we begin to curse dull-witted Brahmā for creating the eyelids, which by their fall every now and then interrupt our vision. O dearest enchanter! we have come to You neglecting our husbands, children, other members of the family, brothers and kinsmen; we know

Your ways and have sought Your presence, being captivated by Your strange and rapturous music. O deceitful One, who other than You would abandon women like us at dead of night? Your secret promises, that kindled the fire of love in our heart, Your smiling face, Your loving looks, Your broad chest, which is the abode of Śrī, the Goddess of Prosperity, all these fire us every moment with inordinate longing and enchant our heart. O Beloved, You have taken this birth in order to allay the suffering of all the residents of Vraja; Your descent is propitious to the whole universe. Our heart is pining for You. Casting off this niggardliness, grant us a little of that remedy which will assuage all the pain in our heart. O Beloved! You walk in this dreary forest with those graceful, tender lotus-like feet which we, lest we should pain them, very gently place on our hard bosom. O Lord, our whole life is centred in You. Our mind reels to think that Your tender feet may be hurt by the hard gravels which are strewn on the ground of this forest. (11—19).

Chapter XXXII

BHAGAVĀN ŚRĪ KRṢNA SUDDENLY APPEARS AND CONSOLES THE GOPĪS

SriSukadeva said: Parikṣit! the Gopīs, who were so dear to the Lord, began thus to sing loudly and rave in their anguish of separation. Yearning to see their beloved Śrī Krṣṇa, they wept from the bottom of their heart and poured forth their lamentations in notes of true music. Just then Bhagavān Śrī Krṣṇa appeared in their midst with smiles on His lotus-like face. Clad in a yellow robe and adorned with a garland of forest flowers, His beauty enchanted Cupid Himself. The moment the Gopīs saw their Beloved return they

stood up in a body with their eyes wide open in joy, even as on the return of the life-breath to the body all the senses and organs of the body are infused with life. One of the Gopīs in great joy took hold of Śrī Krṣṇa's lotus hand with both of her palms and began to rub it gently. Another Gopī placed on her shoulder Śrī Krṣṇa's arm smeared with sandal-paste. A third Gopī received with both of her hands the betel chewed by Śrī Krṣṇa. A fourth placed His lotus feet on her bosom, which had been sorely aching due to His

separation. Another knit her brows and bit her lips not knowing what to do in her bewildering rush of passion, and so looked at Him as if piercing Him with the shafts of her glances. Another looked on His lotus-like face with unwinking eyes and began to drink its nectar through her eyes. But she did not feel satisfied even with repeated draughts of the same, just as saints do not get satisfied with the sight of the lotus feet of the Lord. A seventh Gopī taking the Lord through the gate of her eyes into the very cavity of her heart closed the eyes, and with her hair standing on end remained embracing Him mentally like a Yogi merged in Bliss. Just as spiritual aspirants when they fortunately come across a saint get freed from their worldly afflictions, even so the Gopīs attained excessive joy and supreme delight at the sight of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Parikṣit ! Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa ever exists in the same state of being, His beauty and sweetness are incomparable. But surrounded by the Gopīs, who were now freed from their grief caused by His absence, He looked all the more beautiful; even as God shines all the more when He is surrounded by His Śaktis, or Powers like Wisdom, Strength, etc. (1—10).

Thereafter the Lord taking the Gopīs with Him repaired to the delightful sands of the Jamuna, where a mild, cool breeze perfumed with the scents of blossoming Kunda and Mandāra flowers was blowing drawing the bees, which were ceaselessly humming. The darkness of the night was dispelled by the rays of the autumnal moon. The scene appeared like a dreamland of beauty. The soft sands of the river looked like a special stage set up by the Jamuna with her own hands in the shape of waves

for the enactment of the Divine Sport. Parikṣit ! at the sight of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Gopīs were so overwhelmed with joy that all their agony of heart was immediately dissipated. They achieved the purpose of their existence; even as the Vedas, which lay down rules for the performance of sacrifices and rituals, eventually establish the superiority of Knowledge or Wisdom, and ultimately rising above all worldly desires attain their final goal, viz., Brahma. The Gopīs prepared a seat for their dearest friend Śrī Kṛṣṇa with their upper garment marked with the saffron on their bosom. The Almighty Lord, whom the greatest of Yogīs try to enthrone in their inmost heart, but in vain, now seated Himself on the garment of the Gopīs spread on the sands of the Jamuna. Surrounded by thousands of Gopīs, and worshipped by them, the Lord's beauty shone out with a special grandeur. Parikṣit, the beauty and grace manifested in the three worlds are nothing but the reflection of an infinitesimal fraction of the beauty and grace of the Lord. He is their sole repository and fountain-head. By manifesting His transcendent Beauty, the Lord was rousing all the more the love in the heart of the Gopīs. They welcomed Him with their sportful brows, enchanting smiles and playful glances. Some placed His hands, and others His feet on their lap and enjoying their delightful touch began to make ejaculations extolling His softness as well as sweetness. Then, in a tone of suppressed indignation and mild resentment caused by His sudden disappearance, they spoke to the Lord as follows. (11—15).

The Gopīs said: O Beloved ! some people give their love only to those who love them, while others love even those

who do not love them. And there is a third class of people, who do not love even those who love them. Who among these commend themselves to You ? (16).

Bhagavan Sri Kṛṣṇa said: Friends, he who loves only when he is loved is actuated by a selfish motive. He acts on the principle of give and take. Neither goodwill nor righteousness has any place in him. His only motive is gratification of self, and nothing else. Those who love even those who do not return their love are, like parents, full of affection and compassion. Their conduct is governed both by righteousness and goodwill. Then there is the third class of people who do not love even those who offer them their love. There can be no question of their loving those who do not love them. This type of people can be divided into four classes. Firstly, those who are merged in the Self and possess no sense of duality, that is, who know nothing of the external world. Secondly, those who possess a sense of duality but who, being realized souls, have no dependence on any external object. Thirdly, there is a class of ungrateful people, who do not realize as to who is offering love to them. Fourthly, comes the class of wicked people, who wilfully do an evil turn even to their benefactors and well-wishers. O friends ! if you have asked this question in order to know where I stand, my answer is I belong to an altogether different class. I do not return My love to those who love Me, as is ordinarily done in the world. This does not mean that I do not love them. I do so in order

to draw their heart all the more to Me, so that they may devote themselves ceaselessly to My remembrance. Just as a pauper accidentally coming across a fortune and subsequently losing it gives his whole heart to the thought of his lost money, and thinks of nothing else, even so I become the object of constant thought of the devotee when I hide Myself again and again after meeting him. O Gopis ! you have transgressed for My sake the rules of society as well as the injunctions of the Vedas and forsaken all your kith and kin. I was, therefore, anxious that your mind may remain intensely and exclusively attached to Me, and not fall back on thoughts of your own beauty or of your enviable position. That is why I withdrew Myself from before your eyes. I had not gone anywhere else, I was all the while by your side and amidst you. I was hearing your professions of love and was deriving utmost joy from them. Please do not find fault with My love. You are all My beloved, even as I am the sole object of your love. O dearest Gopis ! for My sake you have cut asunder the very hard ties of family life, which even great Yogis and advanced practicants find it difficult to break. Your relation with Me, belonging as it does to the region of the spirit, is absolutely pure and faultless. If I want to reward you for your exceptional love, service and renunciation, I cannot do so by serving you even through the long life of a celestial. I shall remain a debtor to you for all time. You can give Me absolution from debt by your goodness and love for Me. But I shall ever remain a debtor. (17—22).

Chapter XXXIII

THE GREAT RĀSA DANCE

Sri Sukadeva said: O Parikṣit! on hearing the charming words of the Almighty Lord, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Gopīs forgot their pangs of separation and had their blessedness enhanced by His presence. The Gopīs, the beloved friends and affectionate devotees of the Lord, stood in a circle intertwining one another's arms, when the Lord started His sportful Rāsa dance with them. The Grand Master of all Yogas, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, manifested a Divine Form between every two Gopīs and stood with His arm about the neck of the Gopī on each side. Thus by the side of every Gopī in the circle, there stood a Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Every Gopī felt that her dearest Lord stood by her side. With thousands of Gopis in the company, the Lord thus commenced His magnificent Rāsa dance. Attracted by curiosity and the desire to see this Divine dance, celestials and their consorts thronged in the sky in hundreds of celestial cars. The celestial drums sounded, flowers began to be showered from the sky, the great Gandharvas and their consorts began to sing the purest glory of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. There arose a tumult of sweet sounds in the circle of Rāsa when the bangles, anklets and the small bells attached to the girdles of those thousands of women dancing in the company of their Beloved sounded all at once with their dancing movement. In the midst of the Gopīs, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked as bewitching as a large blue jewel shining in the midst of innumerable gold beads. The Gopīs danced in various rhythms with measured treads. Now they advanced, now receded; now they described a circle, or made various gesticulations by tossing their

hands. Smiles and dancing brows kept time with them. They twisted their waists and made other movements, which shook their breasts as well as the skirts of their garments. Their ear-rings rocked on their cheeks and their faces were covered with drops of sweat. Their braids and the knots of their wearing garment got loose. Thus the Gopīs, the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, sang and danced with Him. O Parikṣit, they looked at the time just like streaks of lightning playing on blue clouds. Their beauty as well as their enviable lot were incomparable. The Gopīs were personifications of Divine Love. Transported with joy at the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they came closer to Him in the course of their dance and began to sing loudly. The note of that song full of the most beautiful strains of music filled the whole world. A Gopī proceeded to sing in chorus with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but suddenly she raised her voice to a higher pitch and played on the notes of the gamut. Pleased with her wonderful mastery over sound and with her beautiful voice, the Lord highly praised her by saying "Well done, well done!" Another Gopī sang the same note in the measure of time called Dhrupada. She was also highly praised, and honoured by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Another Gopī got fatigued during her dance. The jasmine flowers began to drop from her braid, and her bracelets got loose on her wrists. Throwing her arm round the neck of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was close by, she pressed Him close to her and made Him the support for rest. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was standing with one of His arms resting on the shoulder of a Gopī. The natural soft lotus-like fragrance of that arm was enhanced by the smell of



The Lord in Rāsa Dance

the sandal-paste with which it was smeared. The very smell brought ecstasy to the Gopī. With the hair on her body standing on end, she kissed the arm of the Lord. The earrings of another Gopī were rocking due to her dancing and made her cheeks brighter by their lustre. As she pressed her cheek to the cheek of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord gave her from His mouth His half-chewed betel. Another Gopī was dancing and singing by His side jingling the anklets at her feet and the bells of the girdle round her waist; and when overcome with fatigue, she pressed Śrī Kṛṣṇa's comforting lotus-like palms to both sides of her bosom. (1-14).

Parīkṣit! the privilege enjoyed by the Gopīs was even greater than that of Lakṣmī, the Goddess of Prosperity. Having obtained the Lord of Lakṣmī as the object of their love the Gopīs, with the Lord's arms round their neck, sang and sported with Him. The charm of their face enhanced with the lilies on their ears, their cheeks adorned with ringlets of locks, drops of sweat standing on their face, the Gopa damsels danced with the glorious Lord in the court of Rāsa to the accompaniment of the music of their bangles and anklets, and the humming bees played the part of songsters. Just as a small child plays with its reflection fallen on a large glass, even so the Lord of Lakṣmī sported with the damsels of Vraja, now embracing them, now pressing their hands, now casting a love-laden glance at them with a hearty laugh expressing unlimited gaiety. O Parīkṣit! their senses overwhelmed with transports of joy at the contact of the Lord's Person, their wreaths and ornaments loosened and falling from their places, the Gopīs were not able to adjust their unsettled locks, covering garments and bodices. At the sight of this wonderful Rāsa of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the celestial women were stricken

with love and fainted; the moon with her retinue of stars stopped her course and stood in amazement. Parīkṣit! God delights only in the Self, He is not dependent on anything outside Him; and yet in playfulness He assumed as many forms as there were Gopa damsels and sported with them. When the Gopīs felt exhausted due to their prolonged dance and sport, the merciful Lord lovingly wiped the sweat off their faces with His cool and comforting hand. O Parīkṣit! the touch of the Lord's hand and nails gave immense joy to the Gopīs, who sang songs of His holy deeds and offered homage to the Lord with the splendour of their cheeks glowing with brilliant gold ear-rings and curly flowing locks, and with their glances and smiles sweeter than nectar. Then just as a great elephant, being fatigued, breaks through the high banks and enters with force a large reservoir of water followed by she-elephants; even so the Lord, who is above the Vedas and above the ordinary rules of conduct, entered the waters of the Jamuna followed by the Gopīs in order to refresh Himself and sport in the water. Due to the pressure of the Gopīs' bodies, His garland of forest flowers got squeezed and tinged with the marks of saffron on their bosom. The bees followed Him humming like great Gandharvas singing His glories. Parīkṣit! entering the Jamuna, the Gopīs looked at Him most affectionately and smilingly began to throw on Him jets of water from all sides bathing Him with those showers. The celestials in their aerial cars showered flowers on the scene and sang His praises. Thus the Lord, who delights in the Self, sported in the Jamuna like a leader of elephants. Then, coming out of the water, He entered the groves on the bank of the Jamuna, surrounded by bees and the happy

damsels. The beauty of those groves was indescribable. On every side they were adorned with full-blown flowers of land and water and a mild fragrant breeze blew over them. There the Lord moved with the Gopis like a proud he-elephant surrounded by his mates. O Parikṣit ! that autumnal night, to which other nights added their existence, was a most beautiful one. The full moon spread her brilliant rays all over the earth. The night exhibited all the delightful features of autumn as depicted in poetics. In that night Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the company of the devoted Gopis sported in the sands and water of the Jamuna and in the groves on its banks. It should always be remembered that the Lord's desires are unfailing. They belong to the region of the Spirit and the sport also was played in that region. In this sport earthly lust, its urges and acts, were all kept completely subordinate; they were all kept confined by the Lord within His own Self. (15—26).

King Parikṣit said: O Sage, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the sole Lord of the Universe. With His part manifestation, Śrī Balarāma, He came down on earth in His consummate glory. The object of His descent was to establish Dharma (righteousness) and uproot Adharma (vice). He is the author, the teacher and the defender of the moral code. How, then, did He choose to act against Dharma and touch the person of others' women ? I agree that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the Perfect Being, He had nothing to desire or gain in the world ; and yet why did He indulge in this unworthy act ? O holy sage, please remove this doubt from my mind. (27—29).

Sri Sukadeva said: Great and powerful deities like the Sun, Fire, etc., are seen

now and then to violate Dharma and perform daring acts. But such acts do not affect those powerful beings. For instance, Fire consumes everything, but remains untouched by their evils. But the weak man should never think of such acts, far less perform them. If through ignorance or perversity they dare indulge in them, their ruin is certain. Bhagavān Śankara swallowed the poison of the sea. Any other soul trying to imitate Him will be reduced to ashes by the power of the poison. Therefore, the utterances of Divine Beings like Śankara and others should be regarded as truth and man's conduct should be regulated according to them. Their actual conduct is imitated only in rare cases. The thoughtful man should make it a point to practise only what is consistent with their precept. O Parikṣit, those powerful Beings are without the ego. They neither gain anything, in the worldly sense, by virtuous conduct nor lose anything by acting to the contrary. They live above good and evil. When such is the case with those powerful Beings how can the conduct of the Supreme Lord of the Universe Himself, who rules all birds, beasts, men and celestials, be judged by the ordinary human standard of good and evil? He, by worshipping whose dust of feet the devotees derive supreme satisfaction, by union with whom the Yogis shake off the ties of Karma, by reflection on whose Truth the wise get transformed into the very embodiment of Truth, and freed from bondage move as they like,—when that very Lord manifests a transcendent Form in order to fulfil the desire of His devotees, how can any bondage be ascribed to Him? O Parikṣit, turn your thoughts on the character of God. He who abides as Ātmā in the heart of the Gopis, in the heart of their husbands, nay, in the heart of all

creatures invested with a body, He who is the Witness, the Supreme Lord of all, it is He who is sporting manifesting His divine, transcendent Form. The Lord manifests Himself as a human being, and acts like a human being, in order to bestow His grace on Jivas, so that hearing of His sports they may attach themselves to Him. O Parikṣit, the men of Vraja never found fault with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Kept spell-bound by Yogamāyā, they saw their wives all along by their side. The long night, equal to a night of Brahmā, came to its close. The dawn was approaching. Although the

Gopīs had no heart to return to their homes they reluctantly did so, as it was desired by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. For they wanted to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa by every act and every thought. (30—39).

O Parikṣit! he wholistens to, or narrates, with faith and reverence, this transcendent sport of Rāsa dance of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the women of Vraja obtains intense devotion to the feet of the Almighty Lord, and very soon gets freed from the disease of the heart known as lust. In fact, he overcomes the sensual impulse for all time. (40).

Chapter XXXIV

DELIVERANCE OF SUDARŚANA AND ŚANKHACHŪDA

Sri Sukadeva said: Parikṣit! on the occasion of the Śivarātri festival Nanda and the other Gopas, full of enthusiasm, curiosity and delight, started for a holy place known as Ambikāvana, riding on their bullock-drawn carts. There they bathed in the river Saraswati and worshipped with deep devotion and various kinds of offerings God Paśupati, the Knower of all hearts, as well as Goddess Ambikā. They gave away to the Brahmans with very great respect cows, gold, cloths, honey, sweet dishes, etc., and fed them with proper attention. They did this without any worldly motive, and simply with a view to pleasing God Śankara. The highly blessed Nanda, Sunanda and the other Gopas observed fast on that day, and subsisting only on water spent the night on the bank of the Saraswati. (1—4).

In that forest lived a huge python, who was hungry on that day, and accidentally coming that way caught hold of the sleeping Nanda, and began to swallow him. Caught within the jaws of the

python, Nanda screamed out: "Kṛṣṇa ! O Kṛṣṇa ! My darling ! Make haste ! Run ! I am being devoured by a huge serpent. I look to you for help. Please rescue me from this danger." Hearing the screams of Nanda all the cowherds awoke all of a sudden and seeing him in the mouth of the serpent got nonplussed as to what to do. They began to strike the python hard with burning wood. But though assaulted with fire-brands, the serpent did not give up Nanda. In the meantime Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Protector of His devotees, came to the spot and simply touched the serpent with His foot. At the mere touch of the foot of the glorious Lord, all the sins of the animal disappeared; and that very moment casting off his serpent body he appeared in his real form praised even by Vidyādharaś, renowned for their beauty. A celestial lustre emitted from that brilliant body adorned with a necklace of gold. As he, after bowing to the Lord, stood before Him with joined palms, the glorious Lord asked

him: "Who are you ? With a shining form you look very wonderful, indeed ! How did you happen to attain the detestable birth of a python ? You must have been compelled by circumstances to assume the body of a serpent." (5—11).

The Being who emerged from the body of the snake said: "O Lord ! I am Vidyādhara. My name is Sudarśana. Endowed with physical charm and prosperity, I used to go about in every direction in my aerial car. Proud of my personal beauty, one day, I laughed at some Ṛṣis of the family of Angirā on account of their ugly form; and angered by my own fault they pronounced a curse on me that I should take birth as a python. But it was really to bless me that those merciful sages pronounced their curse ; for it is due to that curse that I have been touched today by the Lord and Teacher of the Universe Himself with His foot, which has destroyed all my sins. O Lord, the allayer of misery ! You drive away the fear of those who, terrified by birth and death, resort to You for protection. I have been rid of the curse on coming in contact with Your sacred feet, and seek your permission to return to my abode now. O Protector of the devotees ! O great Yogī ! O Perfect Person ! I lay myself at Your feet. O Ruler of lords of the univese like Indra ! O self-effulgent Paramātmā ! Pray give me leave to go. O Lord, unshakable from Your transcendent state ! it is no wonder that I have been released from the curse of the Brahmans at Your very sight. For he who utters Your Name purifies at once not only himself, but even those who listen to him. Where is the doubt, then, that I should be liberated when You have touched me with Your glorious foot ?" Thus taking leave of Śrī

Kṛṣṇa and going round Him and bowing to Him Sudarśana left for his celestial abode, and Nanda was saved from the peril. Parīkṣit ! when the people of Vraja saw this power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, their minds were filled with wonder. Completing their religious observances and vows at the holy place, they returned to Vraja singing with great reverence of the exploits and greatness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (12—19).

On another night both Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma of miraculous power were sporting in the woods in the midst of Gopa women. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was clad in spotless yellow, while Śrī Balarāma wore a blue dress; and both of them were adorned with garlands of flowers, ornaments and sandal-paste. The Gopīs were singing Their glories in sweet notes full of deep affection. It was just the evening time, stars were making their appearance in the sky and the moon was spreading her rays. The bees were humming drawn by the fragrance of the jasmine, and a mild breeze was blowing carrying the sweet scent of the full-blown lotus. In appreciation of the natural beauty of the scene, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma sang together such ravishing airs modulating their voice according to the various notes of the gamut that the mind and ears of all beings got enraptured. Hearing that music the Gopīs fell into a trance. They were getting insensible of the fact that the knots of their garments were getting loose and flowers were falling from their braids. (20—24).

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma were thus singing and sporting, as if intoxicated, there came on the spot a Yakṣa (demigod) whose name was Śankhachūḍa. He was an attendant of Kubera. O Parīkṣit ! before the very eyes of the two bro-

thers he fearlessly got hold of the Gopīs, who enjoyed their protection, and began to take them towards the north. The brothers, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma, noticed that the Gopīs were being driven like cows seized by a thief, and were helplessly crying "O Rāma, O Kṛṣṇa!" Shouting out their promise of protection in the words "Fear not, we are coming to your help," the two powerful brothers hastily followed with Sāla trees in their hands and speedily overtook the wretched Yakṣa. On seeing them both at his heels like two gods of death, the foolish Yakṣa lost his nerve and aban-

doned the Gopīs ran away in order to save his life. Śrī Balarāma stood guard over the women, while Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave him a chase and followed him wherever he went in order to deprive him of the jewel on his head. At no great distance the Lord overtook the wretch and gave him such a heavy blow with His fist that it deprived him not only of the jewel but also of his head. Having thus slain Śankhachūḍa and brought the shining jewel, the Lord presented it with deep love and affection to His elder brother before all the assembled Gopīs. (25—32).

Chapter XXXV

THE MUSIC OF THE FLUTE IN TWINS

Sri Sukadeva said: Parīkṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to go to the forest every day to graze the cows. The heart of the Gopīs went after Him. Absorbed with their mind in the remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, their voice was engaged in singing of His sportful activities. In the absence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa they used to spend the day in utter cheerlessness. (1).

The Gopīs sang : O friends, when our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa inclines His left cheek to His left arm and dancing His brows holds the flute to His lips and fills it up with music playing His tender fingers on its holes, celestial women passing with their consorts through the sky in their aerial cars listen to it cast in wonder, and blushing to find their hearts struck with the arrows of Cupid, stand confused insensible that their garments had got loose. How shall we bear our separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa ? (2-3).

O friends, listen to another wonder. When the Darling of Nanda smiles, the glow of smile appears as a necklace of

pearls; the golden mark of Śrivatsa on His chest appears as a streak of lightning settled on a blue cloud. When He sweetly sounds His pipe bringing life and delight to those who suffer pangs of separation from Him,



herds of bulls, cows and deer throng round Him from a distance with their heart

charmed by the music of the flute. With half-chewed mouthfuls of grass between their teeth, and listening with erect ears, they stand as if in deep sleep, or as painted animals. (4-5).

O friends, when Nanda's Darling puts peacock-feathers on His head and adorns His locks of hair with flowers, when painting His body with minerals of various colours and putting on tender leaves in various parts of His body He assumes the guise of a wrestler, and in company with Śrī Balarāma and the other cowherd boys begins to summon the cows by uttering their names through the music of the flute, the rivers cease to flow, as if yearning to receive the dust of His feet borne by the breeze. But they are possessed of poor merit like us, whose arms begin to tremble and get paralysed through excess of love when embracing Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They also shake their arms in the form of the waves, but soon their waters get stilled out of affection. (6-7).

O friend, just as the gods sing the praises of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Primal Being endowed with infinite glory, even so the cowherd boys sing of the heroic deeds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the repository of infinite beauty, who enchants all by His transcendent sports. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa goes about the woods of Brindaban in His eternal and unchanging splendour, and calls the cows grazing on the sloping sides of the Govardhana hill each by her special name musically uttered on the flute, the wild creepers and trees blossom forth in profusion and bear fruits so heavily that their branches touch the ground under their weight, as if offering their obeisances, and bristling in intense affection, shower a rain of honey. It appears as if identifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the all-pervading Lord

Viṣṇu, they were offering Him their services. (8-9).



O friend, with a charming Tilaka on His forehead when the best and most beautiful of persons, Bhagavan Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with a garland of forest flowers flowing up to His knee, gives expression to His appreciation of the delightful and high-pitched music of the bees intoxicated with the honey and the divine fragrance of the Tulasī leaves strung on the garland, by playing on His flute in tune with them, the crane, swan and other birds of the lake get charmed with that music, and their hearts being drawn by it they come and sit round Śrī Kṛṣṇa, closing their eyes and contemplating on Him in perfect silence, like so many ascetics with their mind under perfect control. (10-11).

O beauties of Vraja, when our dearest Śrī Kṛṣṇa, gracefully adorning Himself with wreaths of flowers on His ears, and accompanied by Śrī Balarāma, stands on mountain-tops and fills the Universe with the music of His flute;—Himself delighted,

when He spreads His eternal bliss through His music;—the cloud begins to rumble very gently in tune with, and keeping time with, that music. It does not raise the pitch of its roar for fear of disturbing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's music and thereby showing disrespect to Him. It serves Him as an umbrella by spreading its shadow over Him and expresses its delight by spraying small drops of rain like so many flowers over Him. Now and then the Devas also, hiding themselves behind the cloud, shower their flowers on Him. (12-13).

O Yaśodā, your son is an adept in playing the various games of cowherd boys. He is an extremely bright and clever boy. Though untaught by any teacher He has Himself evolved many original tunes, which He plays on His flute. When placing the reed between His lips He raises those tunes, great and wise gods like Indra, Śiva, Brahmā and others come to attend Him with their head and heart bent in reverence.



They listen to that music evolved in different pitches and stand stupefied by its

charm, and get absorbed in it, unable to make out the tunes. (14-15).

O friends ! the soles of His delicate feet contain the wonderful marks of a banner, a thunderbolt, a lotus and a goad. When the land of Vraja gets deeply imprinted with the hoof-marks of cows, He in order to alleviate the pain caused to the earth thereby follows them in the noble gait of the lordly elephant, playing on His flute. The music of the flute, His gait and His sportful glances enhance the desire in our heart to meet Him. We get so enchanted that losing all power of movement, we are reduced to the condition of trees. We lose the consciousness whether our braids are tied or loosened, whether our garments are in order or not. (16-17).

Wearing a necklace of jewels and a garland of Tulasi leaves, whose perfume is favourite to Him, and resting His arm on the shoulder of a beloved companion, when He goes on counting the cows with the help of the beads and sings and plays on the flute, the black she-deer with their heart fascinated by the melody come and surround the Lord of Infinite Excellence and remain standing by Him just like us, Gopis, who renouncing all worldly attachments forget to return to our homes. (18-19).

O virtuous Yaśodā, you are extremely fortunate; that is why you have got a child who delights all His friends. When decorating Himself in a quaint fashion with garlands of Kunda flowers He sports with the cowherd boys and the cows on the banks of the Jamuna the wind, eager to pay Him homage, blows cool, with sandal fragrance, with a gentle and agreeable motion; and the Gandharvas, acting as bards with their musical performances,

stand round Him and serve Him with offerings of various kinds. (20-21).

O friend, our Blue Enchanter is a lover of the cows of Vraja; for their sake He held up the Govardhana hill. Why is He late in returning today ? Aged gods like Brahmā and Śankara detain Him on the way for worshipping His feet. At the close of the day He returns collecting all the cattle and playing on His flute, His followers singing His glory. The dust raised by the hoofs of the cows covers the garland round His neck. Lo ! here comes the great Lord of the stars, born of Yaśoda's womb. Though weary owing to His wanderings in the forest, He is yet a feast to our eyes. He is coming as one eager to fulfil the wishes of us, Gopīs, His friends. (22-23).

O friend, look how beautiful He is ! His reddish eyes are swimming through excess of joy. The garland of forest

flowers shines round His neck. His face is a little pale like the ripening plum on account of dust and fatigue and His cheeks look charming with the splendour of the gold ear-rings. Showing His affection to His friends, the cowherd boys, He is dispersing them. Look, how with a blooming face the jewel of Vraja is coming towards us imitating the majestic strides of the lordly elephant. Like the moon at evening-tide, He is come to relieve the cows and other residents of Vraja like us from the endless heat caused by His separation during the day. (24-25).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit, the mind and heart of the highly blessed women of Vraja were wholly given up to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When He went to the forest during the day, they spent their time in His remembrance and singing to their friends the sportful activities of the Lord. (26).

Chapter XXXVI

ARIṢṭĀSURA'S DELIVERANCE; KAMSA SENDS AKRŪRA TO VRAJA

Sri Sukadeva said : Parīkṣit ! when Śrī Kṛṣṇa was entering Vraja and the Gopīs were jubilating over His return, there came to Vraja an Asura in the form of a huge bull, Ariṣṭa by name, possessed of a large hump and a huge body, shaking the earth as he struck it with his hoofs. He came terribly bellowing, violently breaking the earth with his feet, with tail erect and turning up the mounds of earth with the ends of his horns. Discharging dung and urine in small quantities, he came staring at everything. At his violent and terrible roar, O beloved prince, cows and women were so filled with terror that they were either delivered of their offspring before

time or miscarried; and on his hump the clouds settled mistaking it for a hill. At the sight of this bull possessed of very sharp horns the Gopas and Gopīs trembled in fear, and the animals ran away leaving their sheds. Crying out "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, save us from this danger !" the Gopas and Gopīs sought Śrī Kṛṣṇa's protection, and the Lord noticed that the whole of Gokula was oppressed with fear. Comforting the people with His words "Fear not, there is nothing to be afraid of," the Lord challenged the Asura by saying, "O fool, O wretch, why are you terrifying these cows and their keepers? What will you gain by this ? I am here to put down the strength and pride of wicked

and evil-minded creatures like you." Saying this Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa struck His arms and with a view to kindling the wrath of Ariṣṭa stood nonchalant resting His arm on the shoulder of a friend. Thus angered by the challenge Ariṣṭa struck the ground with his hoofs, and in great rage dashed at Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As he turned round lifting up his tail, the clouds in the sky were dispersed by its stroke. Holding the ends of his horns forward, and staring with bloody eyes, he dashed impetuously at Śrī Kṛṣṇa like the thunderbolt discharged by Indra. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, however, seized him by the horns, and like an elephant driving back its opponent in an elephant-fight, pushed back Ariṣṭa to a distance of eighteen paces and threw him on the ground. Hurled down by the Lord, Ariṣṭa immediately rose to his feet, and boiling with rage, breathing hard and sweating all over, repeated his assault on Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As he rushed forward Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa caught him by the horns, threw him down, set His foot on him and squeezed him like a wet cloth. Then, pulling out his horns, the Lord struck him with them and he lay prostrate on the ground. Parīkṣit, the assailant made the Asura vomit blood and discharge urine and dung. Throwing up his legs, he began to roll his eyes under excruciating pain, and finally gave up his life. Thereupon the gods showered flowers and began to sing hymns of praise to the Lord. When the Asura in the form of the bull was thus killed, all His kith and kin and fellow Gopas began to glorify Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who accompanied by Śrī Balarāma entered Gokula and brought delight to the eyes of the Gopīs. (1—15).

O Parīkṣit, all the deeds of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa were most strange and most wonderful. When the Asura, Ariṣṭa, was slain by

the Lord the divine sage Nārada, whose mind and heart are wholly absorbed in God, and whose only function is to bring people nearer to God, came to Kaṁsa and said to him as follows: "O Kaṁsa, the female child who slipped from your hand and rose to the sky was Yaśodā's girl; while the boy now sporting in Vraja as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Devakī's child. Śrī Balarāma is Rohini's child. He is the seventh issue of Devakī manifested in that form. Vasudeva, being afraid of you, entrusted the care of these two sons to his friend Nanda. It is these two boys who killed so many of your followers and agents." On hearing these words, Kaṁsa was beside himself with rage and at once unsheathed his keen sword intent on killing Vasudeva. But Devarṣi Nārada prevented him from doing so. Learning that their sons alone would be the cause of his death, Kaṁsa threw Vasudeva and Devakī into prison, with their hands and feet shackled with strong chains of iron. When the divine sage Nārada departed, Kaṁsa summoned Keśi and sent him to Vraja with the definite order to kill Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Then Kaṁsa summoned Muṣṭika, Chāṇūra, Śala, Toṣala and other wrestlers, his ministers, as also the keepers of elephants, and said to them: "Valiant Chāṇūra and Muṣṭika ! listen to me with attention. It is said that two sons of Vasudeva, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, live in Nanda's Vraja, and that at their hands my death is ordained. When they are brought here, you should kill them in a wrestling match. Let galleries of various patterns be constructed round the wrestling arena, so that all people, both of the city and the countryside, may freely witness the tournament. O keeper of elephants ! you are a man of judgment. Post your elephant, Kuvalyāpiḍa, at the gate of the amphitheatre and have my two

enemies killed by him when they attempt to enter the enclosure. Let the Bow-sacrifice be duly commenced on the next Chaturdaśi day, and for its success let sacrifices of sacred animals be offered to the most gracious Deity, Bhairava, the Lord of the genii. (16-26).

Parikṣit, Kaṁsa was a great diplomat. Having issued his orders to his ministers, wrestlers and the keeper of elephants he sent for Akrūra, the best of Yadus, and taking him by the hand said to him as follows: "O Akrūra ! you are renowned for your charities, and are worthy of my respect. Please do me an act of friendship. There is none among the people of the Bhoja and Vṛṣṇi clans who is so mindful of my interest as you are. Therefore, I depend upon you as the means of accomplishing a great purpose, just as Indra, though powerful himself, accomplishes his purpose with the help of Viṣṇu. Please go to Nanda's Vraja. There you will find the two sons of Vasudeva. Bring them here in this very chariot without delay. It is said, the gods who live under the protection of Viṣṇu have ordained my death at their hands; therefore, bring them without fail, and together with them bring Nanda and the other Gopas with large presents. As soon as they are brought here, I will have them killed by my elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa. As you are my closest friend, I am taking you into my confidence. You know that Kuvalayāpiḍa is as terrible as the god of death. But if they escape him I will have them struck down by my wrestlers, Chāṇḍra and Muṣṭika, who are as quick and as strong as thunderbolts. When they are both despatched, Vasudeva and their relations, the Vṛṣṇis,

Bhojas and Daśarhas will grieve at their loss. I shall do away with them with my own hand. My father Ugrasena, who, though old, yet aspires to the throne, his brother Devaka, and all others who are my enemies, I shall kill them. Then, O friend Akrūra, this earth will be rid of all thorns in our side. You know that Jarāsandha is my father-in-law; and Dwivida, the chief of monkeys, is my beloved friend. The Asuras, Śambara, Naraka and Bāṇa, all are sincerely devoted to me; with their help I shall destroy the kings ranging on the side of the celestials and thereafter enjoy the earth. I have revealed to you my secret plan. Knowing this please bring at once the two boys, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, inducing them to see the Bow-sacrifice, and the splendour of Mathura, the capital of the Yādava kingdom. (27—37).

Sri Akrura said : O king, you seek to avert the evil that may befall you. Therefore, your deliberation is good. Man should do his duty keeping an equable temper both in success and failure. Whether the desired object will be accomplished depends wholly on Providence. Man indulges in grand projects of his own and does not know that Providence may thwart them altogether. He is elated with joy when his efforts are crowned with success through a good turn of fortune, and gets merged in sorrow when an adverse Providence brings him failure. Still I shall carry out your command. (38-39).

Sri Sukadeva said : Having thus instructed Akrūra and dismissed his counsellors Kaṁsa retired to his palace, and Akrūra returned home. (40).



Chapter XXXVII

DELIVERANCE OF KEŚI AND VYOMĀSURA; DEVARŚI NĀRADA OFFERS HIS PRAISES TO BHAGAVĀN ŚRĪ KRISHNA

Sri Sukadeva said : The Asura Keśi, sent by Kāṁsa, came to Vraja in the form of a huge horse, quick as thought, shattering the earth with his hoofs and dispersing the clouds and the celestial cars crowded in the sky by the stroke of his wavy manes. All beings got terrified with his neighs. His eyes were big and fearful, the cavity of the mouth was like a hole in a tree, the neck was very bulky and his huge body looked like a big dark cloud. Eager to please Kāṁsa by slaying Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the evil-minded Asura came to Vraja making the earth tremble under his feet. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa noticed that the neighs of Keśi terrified the people of Gokula, who lived under His protection, and that tossing the clouds with his tail the great Asura was seeking Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself for a combat. Thereupon the Lord came forward and challenged the Asura, who in his turn loudly roared like a lion. Seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa before him, the Asura got all the more furious and rushed at the Lord with his mouth wide open, as if ready to drink the heavens. Parīkṣit, Keśi possessed a violent and irresistible speed. It was not only difficult to overcome him, but he was even unapproachable on account of his speed. Rushing at Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the brute struck Him with his feet; but dodging the blow Śrī Kṛṣṇa seized him by the hind legs, and like Garuḍa throwing away a serpent, whirled him round and disdainfully threw him to a distance of four hundred cubits, while He Himself stood still on the same ground. Recovering consciousness after a while, Keśi rose and full of rage again rushed headlong at Śrī Kṛṣṇa with his mouth wide open. The Lord smiled

when He saw the Asura come, and suddenly put His left arm into his mouth, even as one puts a serpent into a hole. O Parīkṣit, coming in contact with the Lord's soft lotus-like arm the whole set of Keśi's teeth dropped as if touched by a heated iron rod. Entering his body, the Lord's arm grew like the disease of dropsy when it is neglected. At last the Almighty Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's arm swelled to such an extent that Keśi could not breathe. Throwing up his legs in the air, profusely sweating, his eyes rolling in confusion and passing excretions, he fell down dead. His body burst like a ripe cucumber as soon as it fell. Thereupon, the mighty-armed Śrī Kṛṣṇa drew out His arm. Though He had killed the enemy without any effort, He felt neither any wonder nor was touched with pride. The celestials, however, greatly wondered and felt delighted. Showering flowers over the Lord, they sang His praises. (1—8).

O Parīkṣit, the Divine sage Nārada, foremost among the Lord's devotees, is a true friend and well-wisher of all creatures. Engaging Kāṁsa in remembrance of the Lord, He secretly came to pay his respects to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa of faultless deeds, and spoke to Him as follows: "O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss ! You are beyond mind and speech. You are the Lord of Yoga, O Almighty Ruler of the Universe ! O Vāsudeva, O abode of all, O crest-jewel of the Yadus, O powerful Lord ! You are Antaryāmī, the resider in every heart. You are the one soul permeating all beings like the principle of fire abiding in all firewoods. Remaining

unrevealed in every heart You witness everything. You are the Omnipotent, Omnipresent Person, the One Supreme Ruler of all. O Lord, Yourself supportless, You are the support of all. In the beginning of creation, You created the Gunas through Your Māyā; and with those Gunas You create, protect and destroy this Universe. In order to do this You do not require the aid of any external thing, for Your resolve is true. And You are almighty. You have appeared in the world in the line of Yadu in order to destroy the Daityas, Pramathas and Rākṣasas, who now rule the world as kings, and to protect righteousness and virtue. It is a matter for supreme gratification that You have sportfully killed this demon guised as a horse, frightened by whose terrible neighs even the gods used to run away from their celestial abode. (9—14).

O Lord ! only the day after tomorrow I shall see Chāṇūra, Muṣṭika and other wrestlers, the elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa and Kaṁsa himself slain by You. Next I shall see the destruction of Śankhāsura, Kālayavana, Mura and Narakāsura. I shall see You bring down the wish-yielding tree from heaven to the discomfiture of Indra. Thereafter, You will wed the daughters of warriors; and Your grace, prowess and beauty will be the only price that You will pay for the match. O Lord of the Universe, You will then bring about in Dwaraka Nr̥ga's release from sin. You will recover from Jāmbavān the Syamantaka gem and take his daughter Jāmbavatī for Your wife. You will restore to a Brahman his dead son, bringing him down from Your own abode. Then You will destroy Paundraka, the counterfeit Vāsudeva, and burn the city of Benares, the capital of his friend, the ruler of Benares. Śiśupāla and his

cousin Dantavaktra will fall dead at Your hands during the Rajasūya sacrifice of King Yudhiṣṭhīra and after. O Lord ! while residing at Dwaraka You will accomplish many other heroic deeds, which will form the theme of songs of poets and wise men on earth and which I shall see with my own eyes. Thereafter I shall see You, the embodiment of Time, intent upon reducing the burden of the earth, destroying as Arjuna's Charioteer the many Akṣauhiṇis of warriors. (15—21).

O glorious Lord ! You are perfect and absolutely pure Consciousness. In Your state of Being, nothing else has any existence. You are eternally established in Your Blissful nature. You possess everything. Your desires never prove futile. Māyā, and the stream of Gunas evolved out of Māyā are eternally withdrawn before Your effulgent being. O Lord, the Supreme Ruler, the repository of all transcendent glories, indivisible and eternally existing in the same state of being, I take refuge in You. You are self-contained and free, the witness of every heart and ruler of all. The world together with all its diversities has been conceived by Your Māyā. You have now sportfully assumed a human form as the foremost of Yadus, Vṛṣnis and Sātwatas. I offer my obeisances to Your feet. (22—23).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parīkṣit ! Devarṣi Nārada, the foremost among the Lord's devotees, praised Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in these words and bowed to Him. The sight of the Lord brought extreme delight to his heart. Thereafter, with the permission of the Lord, he departed for his free wanderings throughout the Universe. After slaying Keśi in open combat, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned with His friends, the cowherd boys, to His usual occupation of tending the cows bringing delight to the cowherds

and enhancing the happiness of Vraja. Once, while grazing their cattle on mountain heights, the cowherd boys engaged themselves in a game of hide-and-seek under the guise of thieves and shepherds. They divided themselves into three groups, some acting as thieves, others as shepherds and still others as sheep, and fearlessly engaged themselves in their play. Vyoma, son of Maya, an Asura of great magical powers, disguised as a cowherd boy, joined in the play, and acting the part of a thief carried away many Gopa boys, who played the part of sheep. The great Asura secured everyone he carried away in a mountain-cave and blocked its entrance with a rock. Thus only four or five boys remained. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Protector of His devotees,

detected the mischief played by the Asura, and seized him forcibly while he was carrying away another boy, just as a lion seizes a wolf. Much pained by the grip the powerful Asura resumed his natural form, huge as a mountain, and tried to extricate himself, but failed to do so. With both His arms, the Lord seized him and dashed him to the ground killing the Asura instantaneously like a sacrificial beast. The gods stood in the sky in their aerial cars and witnessed the incident. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa then broke down the rock that blocked the entrance of the cave, and rescuing the cowherd boys from their peril returned to Gokula amidst the praises and acclamations of the gods and cowherds. (24—33).

Chapter XXXVIII

AKRŪRA'S JOURNEY TO VRAJA

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parikṣit! while on the one hand Devarṣi Nārada's prayer awakened in Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa the desire to go to Mathura, on the other hand the noble-minded Akrūra spent the night at Mathura itself, and the very next day drove in a chariot to Nanda's Gokula. While on the way, the highly blessed Akrūra developed the highest form of devotion for the lotus-eyed Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and began to reflect as follows: "What auspicious acts have I done, what great austerities have I performed, what charities have I made, by virtue of which I shall enjoy today the privilege of seeing Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa? I am a man deeply attached to the world. The desire to enjoy worldly pleasures runs through every pore of my being. Therefore, it should be as difficult for me to gain the sight of the Lord whose glories are

sung by the greatest men of virtue, as it is difficult for a Śūdra to study the Vedas. But why should I feel dejected? Though of poor merit, I may yet gain the sight of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; for though borne away by the stream, a straw may yet cross it by mere flux of time and touch the other shore. Today all my evil is gone; my life has achieved its purpose. For today I shall bow to the glorious Lord's lotus feet, which Yogis ever attempt to contemplate, but fail to hold fully in their heart. Kaṇṭaka, however wicked he may be, has done me a great favour indeed; for, sent by him I shall see the lotus feet of God, descended on earth, contemplating whose radiance of nails many a saint in the past got over the impassable darkness of ignorance. Those are the feet which are worshipped by Brahmā, Śiva and other gods; Lakṣmi, the

Goddess of Prosperity, never for a moment leaves the service of those feet; devotees, saints and men of wisdom constantly remain devoted to them; it is those very feet which together with the cowherd boys follow the cows while grazing them in the woods. It is those feet, painted as it were with the saffron on the bosom of the Gopīs, I shall see today. Not only those feet, I am sure I shall see today Lord Mukunda's face of well-formed cheeks and nose, splendid with smiles and love-laden looks and eyes like red lotus, and overhung with curly locks; for I see the auspicious omen of those deer passing me by the right. Lord Viṣṇu, the repository of all loveliness, now at His own will has come down in the form of a man for relieving the burden of the earth. I shall see Him today. There is no denying the fact that my eyes will easily attain the highest fruit of their existence today. The Lord is a mere witness of both the manifest and unmanifest forms of creation. He remains untouched by the ego. By virtue of His own conscious nature, He ever remains free from the misapprehension of differences caused by Nescience. Through His own Yogamāyā He creates in Himself by His own will special Jivas, partaking of His own divine essence, with the vital airs, senses and intellectual faculties and appears to play with them various sports in the groves of Brindaban and in the cottages of the Gopīs. Speech which comes in contact with and recounts His excellent virtues, deeds and the stories of His descent as Avatāras, which are full of auspiciousness and remove all sin, brings life and adds grace and purity to the world; whereas speech which is indifferent to them is as useless as the decoration of a corpse. He, the Supreme Lord, has descended here in the line of Yadu. The object of His descent

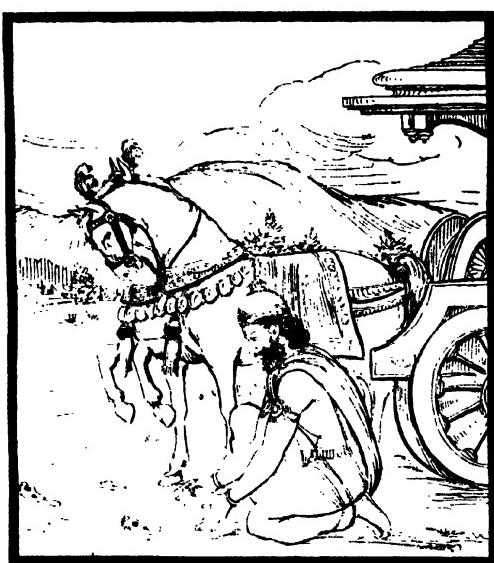
is to bring happiness to the great gods, whose function is to preserve His laws. The same Lord is now living in Vraja and spreading His glory, which is sung even by the gods and which is the repository of all blessings. There is no doubt that I shall see Him today. I shall see Him who is the sole refuge of all gods and all saints, who is the preceptor of the world, with whose charm there is nothing to compare in the three worlds, whose transcendent beauty is a feast to the eyes of those who possess eyes, who exhibits a form which embodies in itself all those graces which are coveted even by Laksñī, the Goddess of Beauty. I shall certainly see Him today, for since this morning I have seen many good omens. (1—14).

What shall I do when I shall see them from a distance ? O, I would directly alight from the chariot and without doubt bow to the feet of the best of persons, Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who rule the Universe,—the feet which even the Yogīs constantly cherish in their mind for the attainment of Self-Realization. Along with them, I shall pay my respects to their friends, the cowherd boys of Brindaban. When I shall fall prostrate at His feet, the omniscient Lord will certainly place His lotus-like palm on the head of this poor self,—the palm that guarantees protection to men who, terrified by the all-devouring serpent of Time, resort to Him for shelter. Indra and Bali attained the dominion of the three worlds by making offerings to those palms, which, fragrant like the lotus, refreshed with their touch the women of Vraja fatigued during the Rāsa dance. I am certain Śrī Kṛṣṇa will not take me for an enemy, though I am a messenger sent by Kāmpsa; for He sees everything. He is inside and outside every

mind; being the knower established in every individual heart, He sees its activity with His unclouded vision. When I shall fall at His feet with folded hands, the Lord will smilingly look on me with eyes full of mercy. All my sins of many births will be immediately destroyed, and being rid of all fears I shall get absorbed in infinite Bliss. I am His relation, His well-wisher and friend; in fact, I am devoted to Him alone, and to no other Deity. He will, therefore, take me up in His long arms and embrace me. That will at once sanctify me and shatter my bondage of Karma. After His embrace, I will again bow to Him and remain standing with folded hands. Then, the glorious Lord will address me as "Uncle Akrūra". It is to enact such sweet sports that He has taken birth as a human being. Welcomed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in this manner, my life, indeed, will become extremely blessed. Hic upon the creature who does not earn the loving regard of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. True, He looks upon all with an equal eye. He has no friend or beloved, no enemy or object of dislike; and there is none who deserves to be treated with indifference by Him either. Yet He attends to the desires of His devotees, just as the wish-yielding tree grants the desires of those who resort to it. For, He is Love personified. When I shall humbly stand before Him with bowed head, Śrī Balarāma will embrace me with a smile, and holding me by both the hands will lead me into the house, and after the customary attentions will ask me about Kāṁsa's activities, and as to how he behaves with Their kith and kin. (15—23).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parikṣit! thus thinking of Śrī Kṛṣṇa all his way, Akrūra arrived at Gokula in his chariot

when the sun had already set. In Vraja he clearly saw the Lord's footprints with their distinctive marks of lotus, barley-seed, goad, etc. He thought these footprints were the same, the dust of which is sought after and worshipped by great gods like Brahmā, etc., who place it on their crown; they were the special ornaments of the earth. With growing impatience through joy at their sight and through excess of love, his hair standing on end, his eyes overflowing with tears, Akrūra alighted from the chariot and falling flat on the ground began to roll in the dust, thinking these were the par-



ticles of dust of the Lord's feet and muttering "Blessed are these, and most blessed am I." O Parikṣit! the mental state of Akrūra as described above, from the moment he received Kāṁsa's message, is the great object of life of every being invested with a body. It is the supreme duty of every living being to cultivate without hypocrisy, and without fear or sorrow, this line of thought with regard to

the Lord's images, marks, sports, shrines and virtues, etc. (24—27).

In Vraja Akrūra saw the two brothers, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma, in the milking shed, wearing yellow and blue garments respectively. Both were quite lads, it was their eleventh year; they were repositories of grace, extremely attractive, with eyes like unto the autumnal lotus, with long arms, charming faces, and gait like that of a young elephant. Śrī Kṛṣṇa had a swarthy complexion, while that of Balarāma was white. Their feet bore the marks of a banner, thunderbolt, goad and lotus; they added grace to the land of Vraja as they walked on it. Their stature and form were sublime, their smiling eyes were full of mercy. Every act they performed was an act of delight and noble playfulness. They were adorned with jewelled necklaces and garlands of forest flowers. Besmeared with pigments of sandal and other sacred unguents of happy fragrance, they had put on spotless clothes after bath. Parikṣit ! Akrūra saw that the Eternal and Foremost Person, the Supreme Ruler and First Cause of the Universe, was manifested with all His parts in the form of the two brothers, Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, for the protection of the world. By Their lustre They were ridding the four directions of their darkness, and looked like two hills, one of emeralds and the other of silver, both cased in gold. Overwhelmed with affection, Akrūra quickly sprang down from the chariot and fell prostrate at the feet of Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. His eyes were bedimmed with tears of joy at the sight of the glorious Lords, the hair on his body stood on end, and his voice being choked with feelings of love, he could

not even say who he was. But the blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is ever kind to those who seek His protection, understood who he was, and with His hands marked with the discus drew him near and embraced him with great delight and affection. The high-souled Śrī Balarāma also embraced him as he stood before Him with great humility, and taking him by his hands led him into the residence accompanied by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (28—37).

At His residence Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa greeted him by asking him whether he had a pleasant journey, gave him an excellent seat, duly washed his feet and presented him with the offering of honey and curd. Then the Lord made the guest a present of a cow, shampooed his weary limbs with great affection and regard and entertained him in true devotion with excellent preparations of perfectly pure food. After the dinner Śrī Balarāma, who knows the highest Dharma, gave him great joy by offering him scented betel leaf, sandal and flowers. When all these attentions were over, Nanda came there and enquired: "Akrūra, how do you get on while merciless and bloodthirsty Kaṇṭha is alive ? He is to men like a butcher to the sheep. For his own safety he killed the children of his own sister before her very eyes unmindful of her screams of protest. What can be more wicked and selfish than this ? We can imagine what kind of happiness and safety his subjects must be enjoying." Asked thus by Nanda in most polite language, and honoured by him, Akrūra forgot, in their mutual conversation, the fatigue of the journey. (38—43).



Chapter XXXIX

ŚRĪ KṛṣṇA AND ŚRĪ BALARĀMA LEAVE FOR MATHURA

Sri Sukadeva said : Received with great respect, comfortably seated and greatly honoured by Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Akrūra realized all the hopes he had entertained on the way. O Parikṣit ! is there anything unattainable for the man with whom Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the abode of Lakṣmī, Goddess of Prosperity, is pleased ? Yet devotees of the Lord do not at all desire anything. After taking His evening meal Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the glorious son of Devakī, came near Śrī Akrūra and asked him questions about Kaṁsa's behaviour towards their friends and relations and about his further intentions. (1—3).

Bhagavan Sri Krsna said : Dear uncle ! you possess a pure and gentle heart. I hope you had a happy journey. I welcome you with the best of feeling. Are all our cousins and relations at Mathura doing well and keeping good health ? My maternal uncle, Kaṁsa, is like a disease in the family. So long as he is thriving it is useless to enquire after the welfare of our people and their children. What a pity that for My sake My innocent and virtuous parents have suffered untold persecutions at his hands ! For My sake they have lost their many sons and have been thrown into prison with their hands and feet duly cuffed and fettered. I have long cherished the desire that some one of you should see Me. It is a matter for gratification that with your visit that desire has been fulfilled. Uncle ! now let me know the object of your visit. (4—7).

Sri Sukadeva said : O Parikṣit, asked by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Akrūra replied : "Kaṁsa cherishes deep hatred for everyone of the Yadu race; he wants to uproot the

clan altogether. He was going to kill Vasudeva, but restrained himself owing to Devarṣi Nārada's intervention. Although he has sent me as a messenger to invite you to attend the Bow-sacrifice, his intention is to kill You by setting his wrestlers on you. He has come to know from Devarṣi Nārada that You are Vasudeva's son. Considering all these facts, please do what appears proper to You." On hearing what Akrūra reported, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma, vanquishers of enemies, laughed and informed their father, Nanda, about the king's message. Thereupon Nanda issued order to the Gopas to collect the yield of all their cows, take presents and get the chariots ready. He said, "We shall go to Mathura tomorrow and present to the king the choicest things yielded by our cows, and shall witness the great festivity to which all the people of the countryside have been invited." Nanda thus proclaimed his command all over Gokula through the principal watchman of the village. (8—12).

O Parikṣit, when the Gopa women learnt that Akrūra had come to Vraja to take away Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Mathura, they felt sorely distressed at heart. Some of them lost the splendour of their faces, which got dried up by the hot breaths blown from their afflicted hearts; while others became so insensate that they did not perceive that their garment had got unsettled, their bracelets dropped down and their braid-knots had been loosened. Some others gave up all their activities and sitting in contemplation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa became insensible to this world as if they were merged in the

Ātmā in Samādhi. Some Gopīs became unconscious as they remembered Śrī Kṛṣṇa's words uttered with affection and smiles full of wonderful expressions, which were deeply rooted in their heart. As they thought over the Lord's most graceful gait and winning deportment, affable smiles and looks, jokes and funs that drove away all sorrow and also His extraordinary exploits, the Gopīs unnerved and stunned at the thought of separation from Him met together in crowds, and with their mind and heart given to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and tears on their faces, said. (13—18).

The Gopīs said: O Providence, there is no touch of compassion in you. You unite creatures in ties of friendship and love, and before desires are fulfilled you separate them. This game of yours is idle like the sport of a child. Having once shown us the Lord's beautiful face, graceful under dark curly locks, with well-formed checks and an aquiline nose, most winning with gentle smiles which remove all sorrow, you intend to take it away from our view. This is not fair on your part. We know Akrūra is not to blame; it is your heartlessness which is responsible for this. Assuming the name of Akrūra it is you who have come to snatch away like an unthinking person our eyes, which you yourself gave us. We are deeply indebted to these eyes; for it is through them that we realized in every limb of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's person the accumulated excellence of your entire creation. (19—21).

Nanda's Darling is fond only of new contacts and new friendships. Lo, in a moment He has broken His ties of friendship with us. Though we are ever yearning after Him, and charmed by Him we sought His service abandoning our homes,

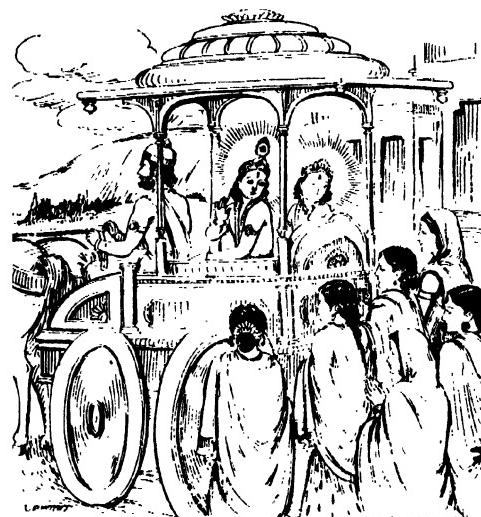
our kith and kin, our children and husbands, what a pity that He does not even look at us! This night will have an auspicious dawn for the women of Mathura, who will doubtless have their long-cherished desires shortly fulfilled. As our beloved Lord of Vraja enters their city, they will drink the sweet nectar of His lotus-like face, full of smiles, enhanced in sweetness by His sidelong looks and glances. O friends! how will our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, however restrained and amenable to the control of His elders He may be, return to us, rustic women, when His heart will be captivated by the women of Mathura by their soft and honeyed accents and deluded by their bashful smiles and winning deportment? Today, certainly, there will be a great feast to the eyes of the people of the Bhoja, Andhaka, Vṛṣni and Sātwata clans of Mathura, and of those who on the way will behold the son of Devakī, the Lord of Lakṣmī, the abode of every excellence. (22—25).

O friend! see how cruel, how heartless is Akrūra; he does not even care to comfort us, who are so sorely grieved, and proposes to remove from before our eyes our Beloved, who is dearer to us than life. It would be a misnomer to call such a cruel man by the name of Akrūra. Our dear Śrī Kṛṣṇa also is no less hard-hearted. Look, he is now comfortably seated in the chariot. After Him those maddened Gopas are making haste to start their carts. The aged people do not care to restrain them and stand indifferent. Now, there is no hope that we would succeed in detaining Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Providence, too, is plotting against us today! Come, let us all make joint efforts to stop Him. Even the fear of the elders of our family and our relations cannot deter us. Separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa was hard for us to bear even for half a second, and now we

are doomed by fate to suffer this agony of heart indefinitely. O friends ! we, who spent like a moment the long night of the Rāsa dance, which was a combination of many nights, enjoying His affection, charming smiles, sweet whispers, playful glances and happy embraces—how shall we now get through without Him this impassable darkness of separation ? How could we at all live without Him who at the close of the day, with Śrī Balarāma and the Gopas, entered Vraja with His lovely curls and garlands covered with the dust of the cows' hoofs, and who, playing upon His flute and looking at us with His smiling glances, made our hearts captive to Him ! (26—30).

Sri Sukadeva said : Thus talking to one another the women of Vraja, deeply grieved at their impending separation and feeling in their hearts the touch, the embrace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, overcame their bashfulness and began to cry aloud uttering in sweet strains the various names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa—Govinda, Dāmodara, Madhava, etc. Thus they spent the whole night weeping. When the sun rose in the morning, Akrūra performed his worship of the sun and other obligatory morning rites, and then started for Mathura in his chariot. Nanda and the other Gopas followed him in their own carts, taking with them abundant presents and pots full of milk, butter and curd. The Gopis, too, whose hearts were steeped in the love of Kṛṣṇa, followed their Beloved, and felt some satisfaction by enjoying a little of His sweet glances and loving smiles, etc. They were expecting a message from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Finding them so deeply distressed at His departure, the chief of Yadus, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, comforted them with the loving assurance that He would be shortly returning. As long as the flag of the chariot was visible, as long as the dust

raised by it could be seen, the Gopis kept standing like so many portraits having sent



their heart after Him. They returned home when they became hopeless about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's return, and in order to relieve their distress began to spend their days and nights in singing about the sports of their Beloved. (31—37).

Parīkṣit ! driving with Śrī Balarāma and Akrūra in the chariot, which was as swift as the wind, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to the bank of the Jamuna, which destroys all sin. There they washed their hands and feet and drank the sweet water of the river, as clear as crystal. Thereafter, together with Śrī Balarāma, the Lord mounted the chariot kept under the shade of trees. Helping the two Brothers to sit in the chariot, and with their leave, Akrūra went to the adjacent pool in the Jamuna (Ananta Tirtha, or the Lake of Brahma), and performed ablutions according to Sastraic directions. Taking a dip in the water he began to repeat the Gāyatrī, when suddenly he beheld both Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma

before him under the water. He said to himself, "I left the two boys of Vasudeva in the chariot, how do They appear in the water? Possibly They are not in the chariot now." So saying he emerged from the water and looked up for Them in the chariot; but there, too, he saw Them seated as before. Then, he thought perhaps the vision in the water was unreal, and in order to verify it took another dip; but now he saw Bhagavān Ananta Himself present in the water, praised by hosts of Siddhas, Chāraṇas, Gandharvas, and Asuras with bowed heads. The God of a thousand heads wore crowns on all His thousand heads and covered His white body resembling a lotus-stalk with a blue garment and looked like the Kailāsa mountain with a thousand peaks. On the lap of Lord Ananta, Akrūra saw another great Puruṣa, blue like the cloud, who wore yellow silks, possessed four arms and looked very gentle, with His eyes somewhat red like lotus-petals. He bore a charming and gracious countenance, enlivened by winning smiles and captivating looks, well-formed brows and a prominent nose, beautiful ears, well-shaped cheeks and rosy lips. His arms were stout and long, extending up to the knees, shoulders high, chest spacious, neck like unto a conch, navel deep and abdomen marked with three folds and looking as beautiful as a tender Peepul leaf. His hips where full and well-formed, thighs well-developed, knees and shoulders beautiful. His ankle-joints were prominent, and the crimson nails of the toes were surrounded by the halo of light rays that issued from them, and His feet were peculiarly charming

with toes tender like lotus-petals. He bore a crown, bracelets and armlets set with very precious jewels, and also a zone, the sacred thread, a necklace, anklets and ear-rings. He held a lotus in one hand, and the conch, the discus and the club in the others, wore the Śrivatsa mark on His chest, the diamond Kaustubha on His bosom and a garland of forest flowers. His attendants headed by Nanda and Sunanda, sages like Sanaka and others, great gods like Brahmā and Rudra, the nine principal Brahmans such as Marīchi, etc., devotees like Prahlāda and Nārada and the eight Vasus—all were offering Him their praises couched in pure Vedic hymns and with words expressive of their characteristic sentiments towards Him. He was waited upon by the six divine potencies, viz., Laksṇī (Prosperity), Puṣṭi (Strength), Sarasvatī (Wisdom), Kānti (Beauty), Kīrti (Fame) and Tuṣṭi (Dispassion), as also by Ilā (Earth), Ěrjā (the Power which arranges His sports), Vidyā (the Power which brings release), Avidyā (the Power which brings bondage) Hlādinī (Bliss), Saṃvit (Knowledge), Māyā and other powers in personal forms. (38—55).

Seeing this Form of the Lord, Akrūra felt highly delighted, his heart became full of the sentiment of supreme devotion, his hair stood on ends, and his eyes got wet with tears of love. Then, summoning courage, he bowed to the Lord placing his head at the Lord's feet, and with perfect care and attention praised Him slowly in a faltering voice choked with emotion. (56—57).



Chapter XL

AKRŪRA SINGS THE PRAISES OF BHAGAVĀN ŚRĪ KRŚNA

Akrura said : Lord ! You are the Supreme Cause of all causes like Prakṛti, etc.; You are the Imperishable Supreme Person, Narāyaṇa; from Your navel rose the lotus whence appeared the four-faced Brahmā, who has evolved out of himself the whole of this creation. I offer my obeisances to Your feet. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, ego, Mahat or the principle of cosmic intelligence, Prakṛti, Puruṣa, mind, senses, objects of all the senses, gods presiding over the senses—these are what constitute the Universe; they are all Your instruments. Prakṛti and all products of Prakṛti are grasped by their pointer, the demonstrative pronoun 'this'; therefore they are other than the self, non-self. Being non-self and material, they cannot recognize You, who are the very Self. Brahmā is no doubt Your own manifestation. But being conditioned by Rajas, a product of Mayā, he does not realize Your nature, which is beyond the Guṇas of Prakṛti. The Yogīs worship You, the Supreme Ruler and Perfect Person, in three forms—firstly, as the indwelling spirit, the witness within the heart; secondly, as the all-pervading Paramātmā; and thirdly, as deities presiding over the sun, moon, fire, etc. Brahmins well-versed in rituals worship You in various forms under the names of several gods through the performance of extensive sacrifices with the help of their Vedic knowledge. And followers of the path of Knowledge renounce all sacrificial activities and remain established in peace within themselves. By means of their intellectual sacrifices they worship You, the embodiment of Light and Knowledge. Others, again, having purified themselves through

practices enunciated in the Pañcharātra and other methods taught by Yourself, worship You in various forms like the Chaturvyūha forms, or in the one form of Narāyaṇa, with their minds absorbed in You. Some others worship You following the methods taught by Śiva, and according to various details taught by different teachers devoted to Śiva, and contemplate on You in the form of Śiva. O Lord ! even those who are devoted to other deities regarding them as distinct from You worship none but You, who are the Supreme Lord pervading all the deities. O Lord ! as rivers rising from mountains and swelled by the rain meander their course from different directions towards the sea, even so all the paths of worship finally find their goal in You. (1-10).

O Lord, threefold are the Guṇas of Your Prakṛti—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. All things in creation, from Brahmā down to the meanest blade of grass, are the products of Prakṛti and remain in Prakṛti, even as the existence of a piece of cloth depends on the warp and woof. But though You are everything, You are not attached to anything. You remain unaffected, as the mere witness of all thoughts. This stream of Guṇas in the shape of births and deaths is a product of Avidyā or Nescience and engulfs gods, men and beasts alike. But You remain wholly unaffected by it. I offer my salutations to You. Fire is Your mouth, the earth represents Your feet, the sun and the moon are Your eyes, the sky is Your navel, the cardinal points are Your ears, the heaven is Your head, the principal gods are Your arms, the seas constitute Your abdomen, and the air has been con-

ceived as Your breath for purposes of meditation. The trees and herbs constitute the hair on Your body, the clouds represent the locks on Your head, the mountains are Your bones and nails, day and night constitute the winks of Your eyes, Brahmā is Your generative organ and rain is Your vital energy. O Imperishable Lord, like aquatic animals living and moving in water, or small insects living within the fig, these worlds with their guardian deities, teeming with innumerable Jīvas, have been conceived in Your Puruṣa Form projected out of Your mind. O Lord, You assume various forms for the purpose of sport. By those incarnated forms of Yours people are rid of their sorrow and rejoice greatly in singing Your glory. O Lord! salutation to You, who assumed the form of a Fish to protect the Vedas, R̄śis, herbs and King Satyavrata during the deluge. Salutation to You, who incarnated as Hayagrīva (Horse-man) to bring about the death of the Asuras Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Salutation to You, who appeared as the great Tortoise who bore the Mandara mountain on His back. Salutation, again and again, to You, who assumed the form of the Boar for sportfully lifting up the earth. Salutation to You, the wonderful Lion, who appeared for the protection of devotees and virtuous men like Prahlāda. Salutation to You, who appearing in the form of a Dwarf measured all the three worlds with Your strides. Salutation to You, the foremost of Bhṛgus, who appeared for the destruction of the overgrowth of haughty Kṣatriyas. Salutation to You, who appeared as Śrī Rāma, the crest-jewel of Raghus, for the destruction of Rāvāna. Salutation, again and again, to You, who for the protection of Vaiṣṇavas and Yādavas, have manifested Yourself in the fourfold forms of Vāsudeva,

Sankarṣana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. For deluding Daityas and Dānavas by the promulgation of the path of pure Ahimsā, You will appear as the Buddha. I offer You my salutation. Again, salutation to You, O Lord ! who will appear as Kalki for the destruction of the Kṣatriyas of the earth, who will mostly imbibe the character of Mlechhas or barbarians. (11—22).

O Lord ! deluded by Your Mayā and holding fast to the notions of 'I' and 'Mine', all the Jīvas of this world are tossing hither and thither in the labyrinth of Karma. Similarly, I am also wandering among objects like the body, children, home, wife, property, relations and the like taking them all to be real; whereas they are as unreal, as false as objects seen in a dream. Steeped in ignorance I have come to regard the unreal as real, the non-self as the self and pain as pleasure. See, how perverse my intellect has become. Thus delighting in pairs of opposites, I have wholly forgotten that You alone are most dear to me, my very self. As an ignorant person passes over water concealed under a layer of grass and runs after a mirage to assuage his thirst, even so turning away from You, who are hidden behind Mayā, I seek happiness in the transient things of the world. I possess no knowledge of the Immutable, Imperishable Being; therefore desires continually arise in my mind and goad me to engage in activities of various kinds for possessing things of the world. I find myself unable to curb the mind, which is dragged hither and thither by the unruly senses. Being helpless, I take refuge at Your feet. Lord, Your feet are inaccessible to the wicked and the unrighteous. Therefore, I think it is Your own grace which is drawing my heart to You. O Lord, whose navel is the seat of a lotus ! when the Jīva

is about to be released from Samsāra, it is then that through the association of saints his intellect and mind get settled on Your feet. It is due to nothing but Your grace that I have gained this state without any effort. O Lord, You are absolute Consciousness. You are the cause and substratum of all forms of cognition, every projection of the mind. In the form of the Jīva, and all that cause pleasure and pain to the Jīva,

viz., Kāla (Time), etc. You alone exist. And You alone are their controller. Your powers are unlimited, You are perfect Brahma; I bow to Your feet. O Lord! You are Vāsudeva, You are Sankarṣaṇa, the support of all Jīvas; You are the deities presiding over the Intellect and the Mind (Pradyumna and Aniruddha). Salutations to You, again and again; O Lord ! protect me who have fallen at Your feet. (23—30).

Chapter XLI

ENTRY OF ŚRĪ KRISHNA INTO MATHURA

While Akrūra was thus engaged in extolling Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord having shown him His transcendent divine form under the water withdrew it in the same way as an actor who has played out his part withdraws from the stage and hides himself behind the curtain. Seeing the vision withdrawn Akrūra, too, emerged from water and finishing his obligatory rites with great despatch returned to the chariot with a wondering mind. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the controller of the senses of all living beings, the witness of their functions, asked him: "Did you see any extraordinary phenomenon on earth, in the heavens or under the water ? Your bewildered looks give indication of that". (1—3).

Akrura said : "Whatever wonders exist on the face of the earth, in the heavens or under the surface of water really exist in You, since this universe is nothing but Your own manifestation. What wonder is, therefore, unseen by me when I am seeing You, the wonder of all wonders ? When I see You, in whom all wonders existing on the face of the earth, in the heavens or under the surface of water find place, what other thing should I see as wonderful elsewhere,

O all-pervading Lord ?" So saying Akrūra, son of Gāndinī (Akrūra's mother) drove his chariot and by sunset he brought Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Mathura. On the way, at every stage, people of the countryside came up to see the two sons of Vasudeva, whose fame had already reached their ears, and were filled with delight to behold Them. They were so enamoured of Them that they could not withdraw their eyes from Them. In the meanwhile Nanda and the other cowherds of Vraja, who had already reached the outskirts of Mathura, stopped in a garden awaiting the arrival of the chariot. Joining the advance party Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the supreme Lord of the universe, took Akrūra, who stood meekly before Him, by the hand and smilingly said to him: "Dear uncle, you may go into the city in advance with the chariot and drive straight to your home. We shall, however, encamp here and visit the city later." (4—10).

Akrura said : My Lord ! I would not enter the city alone, leaving You both here. Pray do not desert me, Your humble devotee, my Master! kind as You are to Your devotees. Come, let us go to our house, O Divine Master. Let us be blessed with Your

holy presence, my dearest friend. Welcome You are with Your elder brother, Śrī Balarāma, and the other Gopas, Your relations and friends. You know we are householders attached to the world; pray sanctify our house with the dust of Your feet. With the waters that wash Your feet are satisfied Pitṛs (manes), gods and the sacrificial fires. By washing Your sacred feet the great Bali became praiseworthy and attained immeasurable wealth and power and also the goal that is promised to Your absolute devotees. The sacred waters that washed Your feet (the waters of the Ganges) sanctified all the three worlds. The great Lord Śankara bears them on His head and the sons of Sagara attained to heaven by their mere touch. O God of gods, O supreme Lord of the universe, the very hearing and chanting of Your holy names and glories bring purity and religious merit. O best of Yadus, the holiest sages sing Your praises. My obeisance to You, O Nārāyaṇa. (11—16).

The Lord said: "I shall certainly come to your house with My noble brother when I have disposed of Kaṇṭsa, the sworn enemy of the Yadus, and give delight to My relatives and friends." (17).

Sri Suka said : Akrūra felt somewhat disappointed on hearing these words of the Lord. He entered the city with reluctance and informing Kaṇṭsa of his having discharged his duty went to his home. The following afternoon the Almighty Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Śrī Balarāma and the other Gopas, entered Mathura with the object of sight-seeing. The Lord saw the city. It was provided with high towered gateways and entrances built of crystals, and with huge doors and portals made of gold, and surrounded by a boundary wall of copper

and brass. It was inaccessible through deep moats, and adorned with parks and beautiful gardens here and there. It was beautifully laid out with spacious cross roads, rows of lofty mansions and pleasure-gardens attached to them, guild-halls, town halls and other public buildings with their awnings, window-faces and pavements inlaid with lapis lazuli, diamonds, crystals, sapphires, corals, pearls and emeralds, and resounding with the joyous notes of pigeons and peacocks perched thereon. The streets, bazaars, lanes and quadrangles were thoroughly moistened and kept from dust; and flowers, tender shoots, fried rice and unbroken grains of rice were strewn here and there. The entrances of houses were specially decorated with earthen jars full of water and sprinkled with curd and sandal-paste, with flowers and rows of lights, tender leaves, plantain and betel-nut trees with bunches of fruits, and with festive flags and pendants of cloth. (18—23).

Parīkṣit, the celebrated sons of Vasudeva entered the city with their comrades by the main road and the women of Mathura in their eagerness to have a look at them hurriedly came out of their houses in large numbers or climbed to the top of their mansions. Some in haste put on their clothes and ornaments in utter disorder, some forgot to wear one of the ornaments worn in pairs, some had only one of their ears ornamenteally painted, some others put on only one anklet, while some more had only one of their eyes painted with collyrium. Some who were taking their meals left their dishes; while others who were having oil rubbed into their body came out without taking their bath. Some others who were fast asleep awoke on hearing the noise and forthwith left their beds and came out; while others who were suckling their babes set

them aside and rushed out of doors. All of them were beside themselves with joy. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa of lotus eyes captivated their heart by His enchanting and sportful smiles and endearing looks, as He walked like a proud and lordly elephant, affording a grand feast to their eyes by His charming person, which is a source of delight even to Lakṣmī, the goddess of Beauty. The women of Mathura had frequently heard of His virtues and had therefore been pining for His sight. They now saw Him with their own eyes. Parīkṣit! the Lord, too, honoured them by sprinkling them with the nectar of His love-laden glances and smiles. Taking His blissful form into their mind through the gates of their eyes they embraced Him mentally with the hair on their body standing erect and assuaged the agony of their heart, which knew no limits. The women standing on the tops of their mansions, the lotus of their face blooming with joy, showered flowers on Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. At every step men of the twice-born



classes worshipped Them both in great joy

with curd and unbroken rice, pots full of water, wreaths of flowers, sandal-paste and abundant presents of various kinds. The citizens, both men and women, observed to one another : "Oh ! what great austerities were performed by the milkmaids of Vraja, who constantly look on these two jewels of humanity, the delight of the entire human race ?" (24—31).

In the meantime Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw a washerman, who also dyed clothes, and asked of him a set of well-washed and excellent clothes. "O good one," He said, "give us both a set each of clothes that may fit Our person. You will doubtless attain the highest good by virtue of this gift; for We eminently deserve the same." The washerman happened to be an employee of the king and had his head turned by royal favours. Asked by the Lord, who is perfect in every way, he grew angry and tauntingly said, "You must be usually wearing such fancy dress, dwelling as you do in woods and mountainous regions ! How dare you overstep your bounds by coveting royal finery ? Get away soon, You foolish chaps, and make no such impertinent request if you want to live on. Beware of the king's men, who seize, belabour and rob insolent fellows like you." While the washerman was thus bragging, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa grew angry and with His finger-ends severed his head from his body. All his men took fright and ran away in various directions leaving the bundles of clothes, which were now taken possession of by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He along with Śrī Sankarṣaṇa equipped Himself with a set of clothes of His choice and gave the rest to the Gopas, casting some to the ground. (32—39).

As they proceeded further, the two brothers came across a weaver, who was so

much pleased with Their sight that he adorned Them with cloth ornaments of various colours and of appropriate size. Beautified with ornaments of various colours, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa shone most gracefully like two young elephants, one white and the other dark-skinned, beautifully adorned on a festive occasion. Pleased with him the Lord conferred on him Mukti characterized by similarity of form with Him, as well as highest prosperity in this world, physical strength, supernatural powers, His own remembrance and abnormal faculties of vision, hearing, etc. (40—42).

Then the two divine brothers proceeded to the residence of Sudāmā, the florist. Seeing Them he rose from his seat and made obeisance to Them by touching the ground with his head. He offered Them seats and water for washing Their hands and feet and worshipped them along with Their followers with wreaths of flowers, betel-leaves, sandal-paste and other courses of worship. He then said, "Today, the object of our birth is realized and our race is hallowed, O Lord ! by Your gracious advent. Nay, the Pitṛs, Devas and Ṛsis are pleased with me. You two are the supreme cause of the entire universe and have appeared

on this earth with Your various parts such as Knowledge, Strength, etc., for the material advancement and spiritual uplift of the world. Even though You love only those who love You, Your vision is not tinged with partiality, as You are the friends, nay, the very soul of the universe, and are equal unto all beings. Pray issue Your commands to Your servant. What shall I do for You ? It is the greatest boon for a man to be enjoined by You to do Your bidding." Making this submission to the Lord and guessing His intention Sudāmā with a heart full of joy presented Them with garlands made of fragrant flowers of a superb quality. Adorned with those garlands together with their followers, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma became highly pleased. And They, the great bestowers of boons, conferred a number of boons on Sudāmā, who stood bowing at their feet and seeking their protection. And he, too, prayed for unflinching devotion to Him, the Soul of the entire universe, friendly relations with His devotees and the greatest compassion for His creatures. The Lord granted him this boon as also prosperity that would grow with his descendants, strength, longevity, fame and glory, and started off with His brother. (43—52).

Chapter XLII

ŚRĪ KṛṣṇA'S GRACE ON KUBJĀ (THE HUNCHBACKED MAID-SERVANT OF KAMSA), BREAKING OF KAMSA'S BOW AND KAMSA'S ANXIETY

SriSukasa said: While proceeding along the main road, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw a youthful but humpbacked woman of handsome features pass with a vessel containing sandal-paste, and laughingly questioned her; for He is the giver of delight to all. "Who are you, O beautiful

girl !" He said, "For whom is this cup of sandal-paste intended ? Tell me the truth, O maiden. Please let us have some of this excellent preparation; you will soon be rewarded for this piece of obligation." (1-2).

The maid-servant said: "I am an attendant of Kamsa, O charming youth !

much liked by His Majesty. They call me Trivakrā (humpbacked, literally curved at three points). My duty is to anoint his royal person with sandal-paste. The unguent prepared by me pleases the chief of Bhojas very much. Other than You both who else can deserve it ?" The heart of Kubjā was completely overpowered by the beauty, gracefulness, amiability, gentle smiles, sweet words and loving looks of the two Divine Brothers. She gave Them both the thick sandal-paste. They applied to Their person the unguent whose colour contrasted with Their complexion and with the upper parts of Their body thus decorated. They appeared most charming. The Lord was greatly pleased with the service of Kubjā and thought of straightening that humpbacked girl of handsome features, who was bent at three points, and thus showing to the world the immediate gain accruing from a sight of Him. With His feet He pressed down the fore parts of her



feet, and applying to her chin the two fingers of His open palm raised them upwards

and straightened up her body. At the magic touch of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the bestower of salvation and divine love, the hump-backed girl was immediately transformed into a beautiful damsel with perfectly straight and well-proportioned limbs and with full hips and heaving breasts. (3—8).

Thus endowed with a charming exterior and possessed of noble qualities, Kubjā was now smitten with love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She pulled Him by the hem of His upper garment and smilingly said to Him, "Come, gallant youth, let us go home. I cannot bear to leave You, since You have captivated my heart. Be gracious unto me, O best of men." Thus importuned by the girl in the presence of Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked at His followers and said to her laughing, "I shall make it a point to visit your house, O handsome lady, after I have achieved my purpose; for it is in such places that men of the world assuage the agony of their heart. Certainly you are the one resort of homeless travellers like us." Dismissing her with these sweet words and proceeding further, the Lord together with Śrī Balarāma was worshipped on the way by the merchants with presents of various kinds, wreaths of flowers, betel-leaves and sandal-paste. The women of those merchants were so much inflamed with love at the sight of the Lord that they forgot their very existence. Their garments got unsettled, their braids got loose and their bracelets dropped out of their wrists, and they stood motionless like so many portraits. (9—14).

The Lord then enquired of the citizens about the place where the bow had been placed for the Bow-sacrifice, and finding His way into it He saw there a wonderful bow resembling the rainbow in size and colour. It was guarded by many men. It had been duly worshipped and adorned with valuable

ornaments. Śrī Kṛṣṇa took it by force into His hands unmindful of the remonstrances of the guards. The Almighty Lord sportfully raised it with His left hand, strung it in a moment, and as the men stood looking on, He drew it and broke it in the middle, just as a mad elephant breaks a sugarcane. The sound of the breaking bow filled all space including the heaven and earth as well as the cardinal points. It was so terrible that even Kaṁsa of redoubtable strength was seized with terror to hear it. Enraged at this the guards with their assistants laid hold of their arms and surrounded the two Brothers with the intention of capturing Them, and shouted threats like 'Seize them,' 'Make them captive.' Perceiving their evil intent Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, too, got infuriated, and laying hold of the two bits of the broken bow despatched them with the same. The additional force sent by Kaṁsa met with the same fate at the hands of the two divine Brothers, who now issued out of the sacrificial hall through the main entrance and went about the city observing its wealth and beauty with great delight. The citizens, who heard of Their extraordinary prowess and actually saw Their majestic bearing, fearlessness and personal beauty, took them for some noble gods. They strolled about the city as They listed till sunset, when They returned to Their camp outside the city along with Their cowherd friends. The prophesies made by the milkmaids of Vraja in a fit of agony over their impending separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the time of His departure for Mathura came out to be literally true in the case of the residents of that town, who had the rare good fortune of feasting their eyes on the exuberant beauty of the person of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ornament of all men, who was sought as Her

one resort by Lakṣmī, the goddess of beauty, in preference to all others who coveted Her. Having washed Their hands and feet the two Brothers partook of rice boiled in milk, and making enquiries about the future plans of Kaṁsa spent the night in perfect repose. (15—25).

The wicked Kaṁsa, when he heard that Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma had not only broken the mighty bow placed in the sacrificial hall and killed the soldiers posted there to keep guard but had also despatched the reinforcement sent by him as a mere sport, was seized with great fear and could not sleep for a long time. He further saw, both while waking and in dream, evil portents heralding his death. While waking he saw his own reflection in a mirror, or in water, without the head; and even though there was no intervening factor, obstructing his vision, the lights and luminaries appeared double to him. Again, he saw holes in his shadow, and did not hear the humming sound of vital airs which is normally heard by closing the cavity of the ears. The trees appeared to him tinged with a yellow colour and the soles of his feet made no impression on the sands or wet soil. In dreams he embraced dead bodies, rode on a donkey, drank poison and wandered alone with a garland of china roses round his neck, and with his whole body anointed with oil and uncovered from top to bottom. He had many more such visions in his waking state as well as in dream, which made him apprehensive of his death and filled him with anxiety; and the result was he could not sleep. (26—31).

When the night was over and the sun appeared in the horizon, Kaṁsa arranged a grand wrestling tournament to be held. His servants decorated the arena; drums

The Kalyana-Kalpataru



Breaking the Bow

were beaten and trumpets sounded; the galleries were decorated with wreaths of flowers, bunting, pendants of cloth and festoons. Citizens and men of the country-side belonging to all communities were comfortably seated on them with the Brahmans and Kṣatriyas in the front row; and princes and chiefs also were provided with royal seats. Accompanied by his ministers and counsellors Kāپsa took his seat on the royal gallery in the midst of his tributary princes and chiefs. He was still

feeling troubled at heart on account of fear. In the midst of a flourish of trumpets proud wrestlers duly dressed and adorned with ornaments entered the arena accompanied by their masters, striking their arms with their hands. Chāпūra, Muṣṭika, Kūta, Śala, Tośala and other principal wrestlers, cheered by the stirring music, took their places in the appointed sphere. Nandagopa and the other Gopas, invited by the king of Bhojas, offered their presents to him and took their seats in a separate gallery. (32—38).

Chapter XLIII

DELIVERANCE OF KUVALAYĀPĪDA AND ŚRĪ KR̄SHA'S ENTRY INTO THE ARENA

Sri Suka said : Parīkṣit ! in the meantime Śrī Kr̄ṣṇa and Śrī Rāma finished Their bath and other morning duties, and hearing the beating of drums and the uproar of wrestlers came up to see the tournament. On reaching the entrance of the amphitheatre Śrī Kr̄ṣṇa saw the elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa stationed there under the command of its keeper. Śrī Kr̄ṣṇa tightened His girdle and tied up his flowing curls and spoke to the keeper in a voice as sonorous and deep as the rumbling of clouds, "Ambaṣṭha, my friend, make way for us. Clear out soon, or I shall presently send you as well as your elephant to the abode of Yama (the god of death). Thus challenged, the keeper fell into a rage and goaded the infuriated elephant, who looked like Yama, against Śrī Kr̄ṣṇa. The huge elephant rushed at Him and promptly seized Him with its trunk. The Lord, however, slipped out of its grasp, dealt it a heavy blow with His fist and hid Himself between its legs. The elephant grew more furious when it did not perceive the Lord and began to look round for Him by

means of its trunk employing its nose to make up the deficiency of its vision, and even succeeded in laying its hold upon Him; but the Lord disengaged Himself with a sudden jerk. He then caught hold of the mighty elephant by its tail and sportfully dragged it to a distance of a hundred cubits even as Garuḍa (the vehicle of Bhagavān Viṣṇu and a sworn enemy of serpents) may drag a serpent. Holding its tail firmly Śrī Kr̄ṣṇa ran contrariwise as the elephant turned to the right or to the left in order to catch hold of Him, just as a child makes a calf turn this way and that by holding its tail. Then He came face to face with the elephant, gave it a severe blow with His fist and ran in front of it at such a speed that it appeared every now and then to catch hold of Him. The Lord was now seeking an opportunity to knock it down. While running He suddenly tumbled down out of sport and rose almost simultaneously. The elephant, however, thought He still lay on the ground and in great rage struck the earth with its tusks. Finding its assault ineffectual the

mighty elephant grew all the more infuriated and being goaded on by the keeper it rushed in great rage towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Madhu, met the elephant as it rushed towards Him, caught it by the trunk and knocked it to the ground. As the elephant fell down the Lord sportfully trod on it like a lion, pulled out its tusks and made short work of the elephant as well as its keepers with the same. (1—14).



Leaving the dead elephant where it lay, with one of its tusks in His hand and the other on His shoulder, and stained by drops of blood and particles of rut, the Lord now entered the amphitheatre. He looked exceptionally charming with pearl-like drops of sweat on His lotus face. Accompanied by a few select Gopas, Śrī Baladeva and Śrī Kṛṣṇa proceeded straight to the arena, armed with the huge tusks of Kuvalayāpiḍa. While entering the arena with His elder brother Śrī Balarāma, Śrī

Kṛṣṇa appeared as a thunderbolt to the wrestlers, a jewel among men to the ordinary people, Love incarnate to the fair sex, a kinsman to the Gopas, a chastiser to the evil-minded princes, a darling to His parents (Vasudeva and Devakī), Death itself to Kaṁsa, the king of Bhojas, a pygmy to the ignorant, the highest Truth to the Yogis and the Supreme Deity to the members of the Vṛṣṇi clan. Parīkṣit! Kaṁsa was naturally a stout-hearted man. But when he saw that Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma had killed the elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa, he thought Them hard to conquer and grew exceedingly nervous. Standing in the arena the two Brothers, of mighty arms, wore a quaint appearance with their peculiar ornaments, wearing apparel and garlands, and looked like two finely dressed actors captivating the hearts of the onlookers with their splendour. Parīkṣit! the people in the galleries, the townsfolk as well as those belonging to the countryside, were filled with rapture to see the two jewels of human society and drank with unsatiated eyes the beauty of Their lovely countenance. The face and the eyes of these people bloomed with joy as they did so. They seemed to enjoy the beauty of the two Brothers with all their senses. With their eyes they seemed to drink of Their beauty, with their tongue they seemed to lick Them, with their nose they seemed to smell Them and with their arms they seemed to embrace Them. They related to one another what they had seen and heard of Them, like old acquaintances reminded of Their sports by Their graceful form, noble qualities, lovable disposition and gallant bearing. (15—22).

"They are the part manifestations of Bhagavān Śrī Nārāyaṇa Himself, the destroyer of all sins and the captivator of

all hearts, descended in the house of Vasudeva. [Pointing towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa] The younger of the two, whom you see before you, was born of Devakī and immediately removed to Gokula, where He lived unknown for all these years, and grew up in the house of Nanda. It was He who put an end to Pūtanā, the demoness, and the demon Trīṇavarta, who came in the guise of a whirlwind, pulled down the two Arjuna trees and killed the Yakṣa named Śankhachūḍa and the demons Keśi, Dhenuka and others of that class. Again, it was He who rescued the cows and the cowherds from wild fire, tamed the serpent Kāliya, and humbled the pride of Indra, the chief of gods. He bore the Govardhana hill on one hand for full one week, and protected Gokula from rain, winds and lightnings. The milkmaids of Vraja used to rid themselves of their afflictions of various kinds without any effort by looking on with great delight every day the lovely countenance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which always bears a cheerful aspect and is full of enchanting smiles and endearing looks. They say under His protecting care the Yadava race will rise in eminence and attain great prosperity, renown and glory. [Pointing to Balarāma] Here is His elder brother, the glorious Rāma, of lotus eyes, by whom it is said the demons Pralambha, Vatsa, Baka and others were slain." (23-30).

While the people were talking thus and the trumpets were blowing, Chāṇūra, the head of wrestlers, addressing Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma, spoke the following words: "O darling of Nanda, and Balarāma, you two are held in great esteem even by renowned warriors. Being told that both of you are great experts in single combat (wrestling) His Majesty has specially

invited you in his eagerness to witness your skill. You know people who render good offices to their ruler by thought, word and deed attain great merit and good fortune; whereas those who act otherwise come to grief and ruin. It is well-known that Gopas, whose occupation it is to tend cows and calves, always merrily sport about and wrestle in the woods while grazing their cows. Therefore, let us, both you and we, do what pleases His Majesty. We shall thereby win the approbation and pleasure of all; for a king verily represents the whole kingdom." (31-35).

Śrī Kṛṣṇa heartily welcomed the proposal; for a single combat was precisely what He sought after. Hearing the words of Chāṇūra, therefore, He made the following reply, which was eminently suited to the time and place of the meeting: "It is true we, too, are the acknowledged subjects of the King of Bhojas, living in woods. We shall deem it our great fortune if we are able to do good offices to our ruler. But, Chāṇūra, we are mere boys, you know; we shall no doubt meet our match. Let there be fair play; let not the assemblage of men witnessing the combat incur the sin of conniving at an ill-matched contest." (36-38).

Chanura said : You are no boy, nor even a lad; and the same is true of Balarāma, the foremost among those possessing strength. For you have playfully killed the elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa, who possessed the strength of a thousand ordinary elephants. Therefore, do not hesitate to compete with men of redoubtable strength like us; the combat will not be called ill-matched. You try your strength with me, O Kṛṣṇa, and let Muṣṭika be pitted against Balarāma. (39-40).

Chapter XLIV

DELIVERANCE OF CHĀNURA, MUṢTIKA AND OTHER WRESTLERS, AND FINALLY OF KAMSA

Sri Suka said: Having thus accepted the proposal of Chāṇūra, which was precisely what He Himself had fixed His mind upon, Śrī Kṛṣṇa met Chāṇūra, while Balarāma encountered Muṣṭika. In their zeal to overthrow each other they interlocked hands with hands and legs with legs and tugged at each other with all their might. They struggled with each other striking forearms with forearms, knees with knees, head with head and chest with chest. They whirled their opponent round, flung him aside, clasped him with their arms, dashed him against the ground, released themselves from his grip and receded. In this way they offered resistance to each other; and in their eagerness to score a victory over the antagonist, they even tried to hurt him by raising him if he cleaved to the ground, lifting him up with the hands, tearing him aside if he clung to their neck, and even knitting together his limbs if necessary. (1—5).

Parikṣit, the ladies who had assembled there to witness the tournament could not tolerate this ill-matched contest. They were filled with compassion for the young boys, who had been pitted against tried athletes, and forming themselves into small groups they said to one another, "What a great sacrilege it is on the part of the king's courtiers to allow this ill-matched contest in the presence of the king! What comparison is there between these two wrestlers of adamantine frame, huge like mountains, on the one hand, and the two young boys, who possess a very delicate frame, and who have not yet attained the full vigour of youth, on the other. The assemblage of men present here will surely incur the sin

of transgressing the bounds of equity and justice, and it is laid down in the scriptures that one should not tarry at a place where unrighteousness is in the ascendant. The scriptures say that a wise man should not even enter an assembly when he has been apprised of the faults of its members; for one who attends such an assembly is sure to incur sin in any case—whether he says anything contrary to facts, keeps mum or pretends ignorance. Mark ye the lotus face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as He makes His movements about His adversary, how it is bedecked with drops of sweat resembling dew-drops settled on a full-blown lotus. Don't you see the lovely face of Śrī Rāma with reddish eyes, enraged at Muṣṭika and brightened with a laugh full of impatience? Blessed indeed is the soil of Vraja, where this Ancient Person, whose feet are adored even by Bhagavān Śrī Śankara and Goddess Lakṣmī, carried on His boyish sports, disguised as a human being, wearing a garland of forest flowers of various colours and playing upon His flute while grazing the cows with Balarāma. What great austerities were performed by the milkmaids of Vraja, who drink with their eyes the nectar of His graceful form, the essence of beauty, unparalleled and unsurpassed in elegance, requiring no external embellishment, appearing new at every moment, not easily accessible to all and the one eternal abode of fame, splendour and glory! Blessed indeed are the women of Vraja, who have their mind constantly fixed on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and who while milking their cows, threshing their rice, churning their curd, smearing their floor with cowdung, etc., rocking the cradle, lulling their crying babes, watering



their plants and sweeping their rooms and performing other household duties go on singing His praises with a devoted and loving heart and with a voice choked with tears. In the morning when He goes out of Vraja taking His cows with Him, and in the evening when He returns therefrom playing upon His flute, those fortunate women hearing the sweet notes of His flute come out of their houses in great haste and stand on the road in order to have a look at His beautiful countenance full of enchanting smiles and gracious looks." (6—16).

Parīkṣit! while the ladies were thus talking to one another, the Almighty Lord, who is the Master of all Yogas, made up His mind to strike down the opponent. The parents of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva and Devakī, who were also present there and who were unaware of their sons' extraordinary prowess, were overtaken with anxiety through parental affection when they heard the affrighted talks of the women, and felt very much troubled at heart. In the meantime Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Chāṇūra, on the one hand, and Balarāma and Muṣṭika, on the other, contended with great zeal employing various traditional devices to overthrow each other. Chāṇūra had his limbs crushed and squeezed under the pressure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's limbs, which smote with the severity of a thunderbolt, and he sank in spirit more than once. He sprang with the swiftness of a hawk and clenching both his hands in great rage struck the Almighty Vāsudeva on the chest. The Lord remained unshaken under this blow, like an elephant struck with a garland. He caught hold of Chāṇūra by his arms and whirling him round several times dashed him to the ground with great force. Chāṇūra had collapsed even while he was being whirled round. He fell down

lifeless like a flag raised for Indra's worship, his ornaments scattered on the ground, his hair dishevelled and garlands broken to pieces. Even so Muṣṭika in the course of his combat with Śrī Balarāma struck Him with his fist and the mighty Balarāma in His turn gave him a smart blow with His palm, which shook his whole frame and caused him such mortal agony that he began to vomit blood and fell dead on the ground like a huge tree blown down by the wind. Parīkṣit! the next wrestler who came forward was Kūṭa, who was playfully and disdainfully killed by Śrī Balarāma, the foremost among those that can deal blows, with his left fist. Almost at the same time Śala and Tośala, the other two principal wrestlers, who closed with Śrī Kṛṣṇa together, met their death at His hands; Śala had his skull smashed by a kick from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while Tośala was rent asunder into two. The principal wrestlers, Chāṇūra, Muṣṭika, Kūṭa, Śala and Tośala having fallen, the rest of the party, all anxious to escape with life, took to their heels. The two divine brothers then dragged their cowherd mates into the arena and sportfully wrestled and danced with them. Their jingling anklets keeping time with the fanfare of the trumpets. (17—29).

The whole assembly with the exception of Kaiṭīsa rejoiced at the exploits of Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while all righteous men headed by the Brahmans applauded Them saying 'Well done, bravo!' Seeing his principal combatants either fallen or put to flight Kaiṭīsa, the king of Bhojas, caused the blowing of trumpets to be stopped and gave the following order: "Drive out of the city the two wicked sons of Vasudeva, rob the Gopas of their wealth and chain down the evil-minded Nanda. Let the evil-minded Vasudeva, who is the vilest creature on

earth, be put to death at once, as also my father Ugrasena, who sides with the enemy, with all his attendants." While Kaṁsa was thus bragging, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa of untiring energy assumed an angry look and springing lightly into the air quickly ascended the lofty royal seat. Seeing Him come like his own death the valiant Kaṁsa rose at once from his seat and laid his hands upon his sword and shield. Like a hawk circling in the air Kaṁsa began to move rapidly right and left, sword in hand, seeking an opportunity to attack his assailant, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa of irresistible and terrible energy caught him forcibly even as Garuḍa seizes a serpent. In course of this struggle Kaṁsa's crown dropped from his head. The all-pervading Lord, the absolute Master, therefore, caught him by the hair and hurled him from his high seat to the floor of the arena and

within Him. Kaṁsa was crushed under the heavy weight and died instantaneously. The Lord now dragged his dead body even as a lion drags an elephant, the whole world witnessing it. Loud and piteous cries of lamentation and woe issued forth from all people, O king. With a fearful heart Kaṁsa daily thought of, and beheld with his mental eyes, the same Lord, bearing the discus as an instrument of punishment in one of His hands, even while drinking water, speaking, walking, sleeping or breathing. He, therefore, attained the same form (a form resembling that of Bhagavān Viṣṇu), which is so difficult to attain. (30—39).

Kaṁsa had eight younger brothers, Kanka, Nyagrodha and others, who were all present there. In great rage they rushed towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa in order to avenge their brother's death. Śrī Balarāma, who was standing close by, lifted up an iron club (which was lying there) and despatched them all, even as a lion kills a herd of cattle, as they came rushing with great speed, duly armed and prepared for a tussel. Drums began to beat in the heavens; Brahmā, Śiva and other Divine personages extolled the Lord, showering flowers on Him with great delight; and celestial damsels danced. Parikṣit ! grieved at the death of their husbands, the wives of Kaṁsa and his brothers came thither beating their heads and shedding tears from their eyes. Embracing their husbands, who were lying on the ground fallen like heroes in open combat, they cried aloud in great lamentation shedding tears of grief again and again, "Ah ! my lord, my dear husband, you knew what is right; nay, you were compassionate and kind to the forlorn. Your death has taken the life out of us and ruined our household and our children.

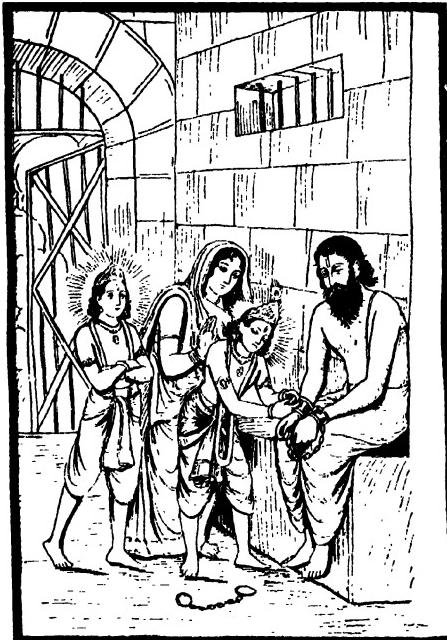


himself sprang down upon him with His whole weight, bearing the entire universe

Losing its lord in you, O jewel among men, this city too like us is shorn of its beauty and lustre and deprived of all joy and festivity. It is because you have been so wantonly cruel to innocent creatures that you have been reduced to this plight. Ah ! could any oppressor of creatures be happy ? Again, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who stands before our eyes, is the origin and end, as well as the protector of all creatures; anyone who treats him with disrespect or contumely can never be happy." (40—48).

Sri Suka said: Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the protector and life-giver of the whole world. He consoled and comforted the ladies of the royal household and caused the obsequies of the deceased duly performed according to the prevailing rites and customs. Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa then liberated Their parents from captivity and made obeisance to them by touching their feet with Their head. Vasudeva and Devakī, who now came to look upon their

sons as Lords of the universe, did not



embrace Them in return out of fear, even though the latter bowed to them. (49—51).

Chapter XLV

INVESTITURE OF ŚRĪ RĀMA AND ŚRĪ KRṢNA WITH THE SACRED THREAD AND THEIR ENTRY INTO GURUKULA

Sri Suka said: Seeing that His parents had come to know of His divinity, which He thought was not desirable for them, because they would thereby be deprived of the pleasure of tending Them as children, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, cast upon them the spell of His Yogamāyā, whereby He enchantas His own men. Accompanied by His elder brother the divine Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was now the acknowledged head of the Satwata clan, approached His parents and bowing with great respect and humility He coaxingly

addressed them as papa and mamma and said, "Even though you have always been yearning to have us, your sons, in your midst, we could not afford you the delight of enjoying our infantile, childish or boyish sports. We, too, being ill-fated could not obtain the privilege of living by your side and were thus deprived of the joy falling to the lot of children who living in their parents' home receive their fondling care. No mortal can repay even in course of a complete life of hundred years the debt of his parents, to whom he owes this body, which yields

the fourfold fruit of human existence, and by whom it is nourished and taken care of. He who, though able-bodied, fails to maintain his parents through bodily service and money is made to eat his own flesh in the other world. He is a dead man, though living, who fails to maintain his aged parents, his devoted and faithful wife, his infant son, his own preceptor, a Brahman, and one who seeks his protection, notwithstanding his capacity to do so. All these days of our life have passed in vain since we were unable to render any service to you, afraid as we were day and night of Kāmpsa. May you therefore be pleased, dear father and dear mummy, to pardon us our inability to offer our dutiful services to you, even though you were wantonly persecuted by the evil-minded Kāmpsa and thus needed our services, helpless and dependent as we were." (1—9).

Sri Suka said: Enchanted by these words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the soul of the universe, who had assumed a human semblance by way of sport, both Vasudeva and Devaki took Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma in their lap and felt overjoyed to embrace Them. Bound by ties of affection they bathed Them both in tears of joy, which trickled down in streams from their eyes; and in a state of utter bewilderment they could not speak a word, their throat being choked with tears. (10—11).

Having thus comforted His parents the glorious son of Devakī installed his maternal grandfather, Ugrasena, as the king of Yadus and said to him: "May you be pleased, O venerable king, to rule us, your loyal subjects; for you know we Yadus cannot ascend the throne on account of the curse uttered by Yayati, Yadu's father (whereas no blame will attach to you, even though you are a Yādava yourself, as you do so at my

request). So long as I wait upon you as your servant, even celestials and other superhuman beings will do homage and pay tributes to you, to say nothing of human kings." Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Maker of the universe, then called back His kinsmen and relations, the Yadus, Vṛṣnis, Andhakas, Madhus, Daśarhas, Kukuras and others, who had fled in various directions for fear of Kāmpsa and suffered many hardships while out of their homes; and receiving them with kindness and comforting them made them settle down in their homes and provided them with money, in order to establish them in life afresh. Secure under the protecting arms of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma and rid of all suffering and sorrow through Their grace, they realized all their ambitions in life and lived happily in their homes perfectly contented. They were overjoyed to see every day the beautiful lotus face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which always bore a cheerful aspect and was enlivened with kindly looks and gentle smiles. By constantly drinking with the cup of their eyes the nectar of the lotus-like face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa even aged people became youthful once more and acquired immense strength and energy. (12—19).

Parikṣit! now Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma approached Nanda and embracing him said, "Dear father! you and mother Yaśodā nourished and fondled us with great affection and care. It was but natural for you to have done so; for it is a well-known fact that parents love their children more dearly than their own self. They are the real father and mother who nourish like their own children the infants abandoned by their parents through sheer inability to nourish and protect them. Now, dear father, you may return to Vraja. Rendering some satisfaction to our kinsmen here we shall also come to see you all, our

dear and near ones, who will surely feel the pangs of our separation through excessive love for us." Having thus comforted Nanda and the other Gopas of Vraja, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa with very kind attentions presented them with clothes, ornaments and utensils of copper, brass, etc. Overwhelmed with emotion at these comforting words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Nanda embraced Them both and returned with the Gopas to Vraja with eyes full of tears. (20—25).

Then Vasudeva, O king, caused both his sons to be invested with the sacred thread by his family priest, Śrī Gargāchārya, assisted by other Brahmans. Having worshipped and adorned them all with ornaments of various kinds he gave them the customary Dakṣiṇā (a sum of money given to the officiating priest by way of fee at the end of a religious ceremony) and cows duly adorned with chains of gold and other ornaments and decked with silk garlands, accompanied by their calves. The magnanimous Vasudeva also gave away a number of cows which he recollected having mentally resolved to give at the time of nativity of Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and which having been set apart for the purpose had been wrongfully attached by Kaṇisa. Having thus been invested with the sacred thread by Śrī Gargāchārya, the hereditary priest of the Yadus, and attained the rank of a twice-born, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma entered the student life and formally undertook the vow of adoring the Gayatrī and studying the Vedas with strict celibacy. (26—29).

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma are the fountain-heads of all knowledge, being the omniscient Lords of the entire universe. Their wisdom is unclouded and unacquired; yet They kept it concealed by behaving like

ordinary human beings seeking to receive instruction in a preceptor's house according to the injunctions of the Śāstras. They now went to Āchārya Sāndīpani of the line of Kaśyapa, who resided at Ujjain. Approaching Their preceptor with due ceremony They began to live at his residence with exemplary self-control and discipline and earned the respect of all by Their noble conduct and behaviour. They bore great devotion to the person of Their preceptor and served him as a deity, and thus taught the world at large, by Their example, the ideal way of serving a preceptor. Pleased with Their sincere devotion and faithful service the preceptor Sāndīpani instructed Them in all the four Vedas along with the six Vedāngas (branches of knowledge auxiliary to the study of the Vedas, viz., Astronomy, Grammar, Prosody, Etymology, the science dealing with the proper articulation and pronunciation of words, and the science of rituals) as also in Dhanurveda (the science of archery), with all its secrets, the Dharmasāstras (codes of law), Mīmāṃsā and other sciences dealing with the interpretation of the Vedas, logic and the science of politics with its six branches. Parikṣit ! the two supreme persons, who are the fountain-heads of all knowledge, acquired all this knowledge the moment it was given out by the teacher. With Their wonderful power of application, O king ! they mastered the sixty-four* arts in course of

* The following are the sixty-four arts mentioned in Sastras—(1) Singing, (2) Playing upon various musical instruments, (3) Dancing, (4) Acting and gesticulation, mimicry, etc., (5) Drawing and painting, (6) Embroidery, (7) Preparing various offerings of worship with grains of rice, flowers, etc., (8) Making

the same number of days, and having thus completed the course of Their studies They requested Their preceptor to ask as Gurudakṣīṇā (the parting gift made by a pupil to his teacher while returning home at the end of his studies) whatever he liked from Them. Parīkṣit! Sāndipani had now directly perceived the extraordinary powers and superhuman intelligence of the two brothers. He, therefore, consulted his wife and asked for the restoration of his boy, who had been swallowed by the waves of the

sea at Prabhāsa. Promising to carry out his order the two Heroes of unlimited prowess mounted Their chariot and went to Prabhāsa. Proceeding straight to the beach They sat there awhile, when the deity of the sea noticing Their presence brought Them offerings of worship and tribute. The Lord demanded of him speedy restoration of His preceptor's son, who as a boy had been engulfed by the sea in a huge wave. (30—39).

a bed of flowers, (9) Colouring the teeth, clothes and the body, (10) Paving the floor with precious stones, (11) Preparing a bed, (12) Using a pot full of water as a musical instrument and stemming the flow of water, (13) Showing miracles of various kinds, (14) Preparing chaplets and garlands of flowers, (15) Making ornaments of flowers for the ears and the head, (16) Preparing toilets of various kinds, (17) Painting ornamental figures on the ears, (18) Making perfumes, scented oils and cosmetics, etc., of various kinds, (19) Decorating with ornaments of flowers, (20) Jugglery, (21) Appearing in various guises of one's choice, (22) Sleight of hand, (23) The culinary art, (24) Making drinks of various tastes and colours and spirituous liquors of various kinds, (25) Sewing and other needle-work, (26) Making puppets and arranging their show, (27) Making musical instruments of various kinds, (28) Solving riddles, (29) Capping verses, (30) Articulating words, etc., which are difficult to pronounce, (31) Deciphering an illegible hand, (32) Dramaturgy and story-writing, (33) Completion of incomplete verses or parts of verses, (34) Making of ligatures, canes, arrows, etc., (35) Spinning yarn with a spindle, (36) Carpentry, (37) Architecture, (38) Testing valuable metals and precious stones, (39) Alchemy,

(40) Colouring precious stones, (41) Knowledge of underground mines, (42) Nursing of trees and plants, (43) Setting game rams, cocks and quails to fight as sport, (44) Teaching parrots and other birds to imitate human speech, (45) Making a person quit his place by means of a charm, (46) Cleaning and dressing the hair, (47) Reading letters hidden from one's view and divining the nature of substances held within one's palm, (48) Knowledge of books written in the language of barbarians, (49) Knowledge of different vernacular languages, (50) Reading of omens and portents, (51) Making diagrams by means of letters of the alphabet arranged in different orders as mystical formulae to be worshipped or worn as amulets, (52) Splitting hard substances such as diamonds, etc., into two or more pieces, (53) Reading the thoughts of others and bringing them out in verse, (54) Lexicography, (55) Knowledge of prosody, (56) Showing off one's clothes as made of a superior texture than what they really are, (57) Accomplishing a thing in diverse ways, (58) Playing tricks (59) Playing at dice, (60) Attracting remote substances or persons, (61) Making children's toys, (62) The practice of charms, (63) The art of ensuring victory, and (64) Keeping goblins and vampires under one's control.

The deity said: "Lord, the boy was not taken away by me. Kṛṣṇa ! there is a great Asura, Pañchajana by name, belonging to the Daitya class, who abides in my waters in the form of a conch; surely he must have carried away the boy." Hearing this the Lord at once plunged into the waters and killed the Asura. But the boy was not to be found in his bowels. The Lord took up the conch which formed his body, and returned to His chariot. Śrī Kṛṣṇa then proceeded to Samyamānī, the beloved city of Yama (the god of death), accompanied by Śrī Balarāma, and reaching there blew His conch in a high pitch. Hearing the thundering blast of the conch Yama, the chastiser of all creatures, came and offered Them worship on a grand and sumptuous scale with deep devotion. Then, bowing down he said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who dwells in the heart of all creatures: 'O all-pervading Lord, sportfully appearing in human semblance ! what shall I do for You both ?' (40—44).

The Lord said: 'O great Ruler, I command you to restore My preceptor's son, who was brought here in consequence of his own Karma.' Yama said, 'Let it be so' and instantaneously brought the preceptor's son and handed him over to the Lord. The two crest-jewels of Yadu's race brought the boy to Ujjain and restoring him to Their preceptor requested him to ask for any other boon. (45—46).



The preceptor said: "You have very well discharged, my children, the debt which you owed to your preceptor. What desire of the one who is a preceptor to those like you could remain unaccomplished? Now you may return home, O heroes. Let your names be hallowed and glorified and let all that you have learnt remain ever fresh in your memory here as well as hereafter." Thus permitted by Their preceptor, dear Parikṣit, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa drove in Their chariot, swift as the wind and thundering like a cloud, to the city of Mathura. The people of Mathura, who had been missing Them for a long time, were all overjoyed to see Them back in their midst and felt as if they had recovered their lost treasure. (47—50).

Chapter XLVI

UDDHAVA'S DEPARTURE FOR VRAJA

Sri Suka said: Uddhava was an outstanding personality among the Viśnis and a beloved friend and counsellor of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

He was a man of mature judgment and a direct pupil of Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of celestials. One day Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa,

who drives away the sorrows and sufferings of those who resort to Him, took by the hand Uddhava, who was His most beloved friend and solely devoted to Him, and said : "Uddhava dear, you go to Vraja and bring delight to My foster-parents, Nanda and Yaśoda, and also rid the Gopīs of their agony caused by My separation by delivering to them My message. Believe Me, Uddhava, the Gopīs have given their mind and heart to Me; they regard Me as their life and soul. For My sake they have abandoned all their relations, including their sons and husbands; and with their intellect also they have resorted to Me as their beloved friend, the object of their highest affection, nay, their very self. Uddhava, you know it is My vow to look after those who have relinquished both their worldly and other-worldly interests for My sake. Since I, the dearest of all their beloved objects, have come away so far from them, the women of Gokula ever think of Me and remain lost to all other interests, overwhelmed with anxiety on account of My separation. The Gopīs, who have set their heart and soul on Me, are somehow with great difficulty dragging their existence relying on My assurances of returning to Gokula. (1-6).

Sri Suka said : Parikṣit ! hearing these words of the Lord, Uddhava devoutly received the message of his Master and drove in a chariot to Nanda's Gokula. The blessed Uddhava reached Nanda's Vraja as the sun was setting in the horizon. Moreover, his chariot was shrouded in dust raised by the hoofs of the cattle that were returning home. Hence nobody perceived him. Vraja presented a delightful appearance at that moment, echoing as it did with the bellowing of stout bulls that contended with one another for the sake of the cow in heat,

and of cows that walked in haste in spite of their heavy udders eager to meet their calves. Snow-white calves that frisked and frolicked here and there appeared very beautiful; the deep gurgling sound produced by the milking of cows and the dulcet music of the flute made the place all the more attractive. Gopīs richly dressed and adorned with ornaments sang of the noble deeds of Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Gopas moved here and there, all contributing to the gay appearance of Vraja. The dwellings of Gopas, where sacred fires, the sun, guests, cows, manes and gods had been duly worshipped, where frankincense was being burnt, and which were illuminated by lights and decorated with garlands of flowers, added to the charm of the village. The groves all round were in full blossom and resounded with the sweet notes of birds and the hum-ming of bees. Lotuses were growing here and there in clusters, both on land and in water, and swans and geese were swarming there. (7-13).

When Uddhava, the beloved companion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, arrived in Vraja, Nanda received him with great delight. He embraced him and showed him every regard as if Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself had returned. He served him with dainty dishes; and when he had comfortably stretched himself on a soft bed and the servants had relieved him from his fatigue by shampooing his legs, etc., Nanda approached him and said : "O blessed Uddhava, is our friend Vasudeva doing well ? He must be feeling very happy, now that he has been released from captivity and finds himself once more in the midst of his sons and other relations and friends. It is a matter for deep gratification that the wicked Kaṁsa, who always hated the virtuous and pious Yadus, has fallen with his followers through his own sins.

Does our beloved Kṛṣṇa ever remember us, His dear and near ones, His mother, His boy companions, the Gopas, the Vraja, which looks upon Him as its sole Lord, the cows, the glades of Brindaban and the Govardhana hill ? Would Govinda come here but once to see His kith and kin, that we may see His face with a beautiful nose and winning smiles and looks ? The high-souled Kṛṣṇa rescued us from the wild fire, protected us against tempestuous winds and heavy showers, and saved us from the mighty bull, the deadly serpent and other mortal enemies so difficult to overcome. O dear Uddhava ! when we are reminded of Kṛṣṇa's exploits, His sportful side-glances, His winning smiles and sweet words, all our activities get suspended. As we look on the streams, hills and dales, the scenes of His many sportful activities, adorned with His footprints, our mind and heart get lost in Him. I hold Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma to be the foremost among gods, who have come down on earth to accomplish some great object of the celestials. This was what the venerable Garga told me. You know They sportfully killed Kaṭīsa, who possessed the strength of ten thousand elephants, his two renowned wrestlers as well as the huge elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa, even as the king of the beasts kills a herd of cattle. Again, Śrī Kṛṣṇa broke the mighty bow measuring twenty-seven feet in length, even as an elephant breaks a stick, and bore the Govardhana hill on one hand for a full week. And by Him were playfully killed Pralamba, Dhenuka, Ariṣṭa, Tṛṇavarta, Baka and other demons, who had conquered both Devas and Asuras. (14—26).

Sri Suka said: Nanda's mind was ever deeply imbued with love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When he thus recalled, one by one, the many

exploits of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he was overwhelmed with a flood of emotion and full of deep yearning he could speak no more. Yaśodā, too, listened to the description of her Darling's wonderful deeds and shed tears of love, milk flowing from her breasts out of affection all the time. Uddhava rejoiced to observe the deep affection that Nanda and Yaśodā bore in their heart for the divine Śrī Kṛṣṇa and spoke to them in the following words. (27—29).

Uddhava said: Dear uncle and dear aunt ! though so modest and unassuming you two are the most blessed of all that are born with a body here, inasmuch as you have cultivated such a deep affection for Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa, the progenitor and guide of the whole universe. Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are the material as well as the efficient Cause of the entire creation. While Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Puruṣa (the all-pervading Spirit), Śrī Balarāma is the Prakṛti or Primordial Energy. Having entered into all beings, these two Ancients rule the conscious spirit which informs them all and yet transcends them, and which appears different in different bodies. O high-souled uncle ! since both of you have cultivated such a deep affection for Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa, who is the soul and origin of all, and has appeared in human semblance for the sake of His devotees, what meritorious act remains yet to be performed by you ? By fixing his taintless mind on Him even for a moment while leaving his mortal frame, one immediately shakes off all latencies of Karma and realizing his identity with Brahma becomes effulgent like the sun and attains the highest goal. At no distant date the divine Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the unfailing friend of His devotees and the crest-jewel of Yadu's race, will visit Vraja and bring

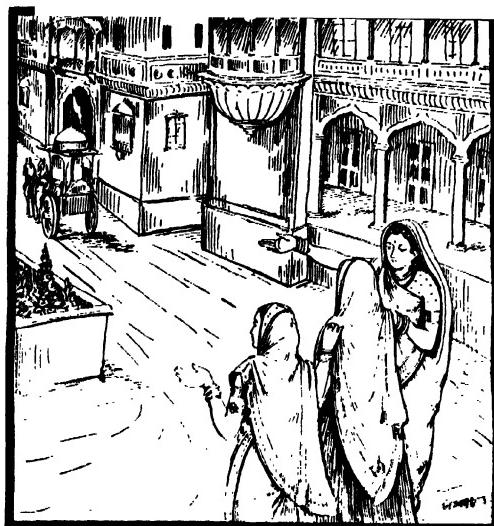
delight to you, His beloved parents. You will remember when He had slain Kaiśa, the sworn enemy of the entire Yādava race, in open combat in his own arena. He came to you and gave you the assurance that He would return to Vraja. Śrī Kṛṣṇa will surely redeem His promise. Do not grieve, O blessed ones; you will presently observe Śrī Kṛṣṇa by your side. For He resides in the heart of all beings, even as fire is latent in all varieties of wood. Since He does not identify Himself with a particular body, there is none beloved of Him or loathsome to Him; and since He is equal to all and equally present in all, there is none high or low in His eyes, so much so that even he who is hostile to Him is not hostile in His eyes. He has no father, no mother, no wife, no children, no friend, no foe; He is neither born nor endowed with a body. He has no Karma to reap the consequences of in this world; and yet He is born in various wombs of pure, impure and mixed types, for the sake of sport and for the protection of the virtuous. Though untouched by the three-fold modes of Prakṛti, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, He associates Himself with the same, and though Himself unborn and above all sport He sportfully creates, sustains and dissolves the universe with the help of these Guṇas. Again, just as to the eye of one who is spinning round like a top, the earth around him appears to revolve, and just as through identification with the mind, which is the real doer, doership is attributed to the Self, which is really a non-doer, similarly even the creation, etc., of the universe by God are only apparent and not real; it is the Guṇas, really speaking,

which perform this threefold function with regard to the universe and not God, who is really a non-doer. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, my dear uncle, is a son not only to you both; He is the son, nay, the father, the mother, the Self and the supreme Ruler of all creatures. Whatever is perceived or heard of, all that has reference to the past, the present and the future, the moving as well as the immovable, small and great—without Him there is nothing that can be said to exist; in fact, everything is He and He alone is real. (30—43).

While Nanda and Uddhava, the devoted servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, were thus conversing, the night stole away. The Gopīs woke up in the last quarter of the night, kindled their lights, decorated and worshipped the threshold as a symbol of the deity of the house, swept their houses, and started churning the curd. With the jewels of their bracelets shining more brightly in the light of their lamps, as their arms alternately moved backward and forward while pulling the churning cord; with their hips, breasts and necklaces shaking with the motion of their arms; with their cheeks brightened by the radiance of their ear-rings, and with the rosy colour of their faces heightened by the saffron-paste painted on them, the Gopīs looked very charming indeed. The women of Vraja were all the time singing praises of the Lord with lotus eyes and their sweet melody mingling with the sound produced by the churning of curd made a queer combination and reached the heaven warding off the influence of evil stars all around. (44—46).

When the sun appeared in the horizon, the women of Vraja saw the golden car at

the door of Nanda and enquired whom it



belonged to. "Has Akrūra appeared once more," they said to one another, "Akrūra, who took away the lotus-eyed Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Mathura just in order to accomplish the selfish ends of Kamsa ? What purpose could he have in coming over here once again ? Will he offer our blood to the spirit of the deceased Kamsa as a libation to appease it ?" (47-48).

While the women of Vraja were talking in this strain, Uddhava made his appearance having finished his daily morning routine. (49).

Chapter XLVII

MEETING OF UDDHAVA WITH THE GOPIS AND THEIR SONG ADDRESSED TO A BEE

Sri Suka said: The women of Vraja saw that the man who had arrived there resembled Śrī Kṛṣṇa in appearance and style of dress, etc. He had long arms and eyes like fresh-blown lotus, was clad in yellow silk and adorned with a wreath of lotuses, and had a cheerful countenance like unto a full-blown lotus and brightened with ear-rings set with cut jewels. The Gopis of bright smiles enquired, "Who is it that looks so bewitching ? Whence has he come and whose son is he, that he should put on the dress and ornaments of our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa ?" So saying all of them in great curiosity surrounded Uddhava, who was

devoted to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa of unsullied fame. When they learnt that he was a messenger from the beloved Lord of Lakṣmī, they bowed down to him with great reverence and greeted him with bashful smiles and looks and kind words; and when he had taken his seat they privately enquired of him, "We understand that you are an associate of the Lord of Yadus and have come here with His message, and that you have been sent to this place by your Master to bring delight to His parents. Otherwise we do not see anything in this Gokula worth remembering for Him. It is difficult even for an ascetic to shake off the

ties of attachment to his kith and kin. The contacts of friendship that one makes with others always have some selfish end in view and a show of friendship is made only so long as those selfish ends are served. Especially the love professed by men towards women is as shortlived as that of bees for the flowers. Public women bid adieu to the impoverished man; the people abandon the ruler who is unable to protect them; the students who have completed their studies bid good-bye to their preceptor; the priests officiating at a sacrifice take leave of the sacrificer on receiving their fees; birds quit the tree without fruits; animals leave the forest that has been consumed by fire and a paramour deserts the woman enjoyed by him." The Gopis had given their mind, speech and body to Śri Kṛṣṇa. When Uddhava, the messenger of their beloved Govinda, made his appearance in Vraja, they forgot all about the world and lost their sense of propriety. Recollecting one by one the delightful sports of their beloved Lord, pertaining to His childhood and boyhood, they sang of them and wept aloud. One of them, who had been mentally enjoying at that time a meeting with her beloved Śri Kṛṣṇa, caught sight of a bee and imagining it to be a messenger sent by her beloved Lord spoke thus. (1—11).

The Gopi said: O mischievous drone, you are a friend of that deceitful lover; touch not our feet with your tentacles, tinged as they are with the saffron on the garlands of forest flowers worn by your friend round His neck and rubbed against the bosom of our rivals. Let the Lord of Madhus (a branch of the Yādava clan) bear it on His person as a token of favour of those proud women and make Himself an object of laughter in the assembly of

Yadus. Since you are His messenger, it is but natural that you should also behave in the same way. Having but once allowed



us to taste of the inebriating nectar of His lips He immediately left us even as you, His friend, leave the flowers. We wonder how Goddess Lakṣmi constantly tends His lotus feet; it seems Her mind is enchanted with the honeyed words of the most glorious Lord. Why do you, O six-footed creature, sing to us at such length the glories of the Lord of Yadus, who is not new to us ? We know Him too well to be deceived by such talk any more. Let praises of that glorious Lord be sung before His beloved friends, the ladies of Mathura, the agony of whose heart has been assuaged by Him and who will therefore be pleased with your services and grant you the desired boon. What woman is there in heaven, on earth or in the subterranean world who will not be easily won over by His cunning and sweet smiles and dancing eyebrows ? What worth do we have in His eyes, whose dust of feet is adored even by Lakṣmi, the goddess of wealth and beauty ? But your Master must

remember that He alone deserves to be called the most glorious and praiseworthy, who espouses the cause of the weak and the forlorn. Take off your head from my feet, O bee; I know you are a past master in conciliating those who are angry by flattering words and professions of love, having learnt this art from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You know we abandoned for His sake our husbands, children and other relations; and yet with a callous heart He has forsaken us. How, then, shall we make peace with Him? Like a hunter of cruel purpose He pierced with an arrow the lord of monkeys (Vāli); and in order to win the favour of His consort (Sītā), who domineered over Him, He deformed Śūrpaṇakha, who sought His love. When He was born as a dwarf in the house of Kaśyapa, He bound Bali hand and foot even after accepting his worship, just as a crow with its relations surrounds and harasses the man who offers food to it even after partaking of the offering. Therefore talk no more of making friends with those having a dark complexion. But all the same we cannot help talking about Him; for that is the asset of our life. Even those who have but once tasted a few drops of the nectar of His stories are rid of all pairs of opposites and lost to this world; while many of them forthwith renounce their home and family life, which is full of woes and sufferings, and choose to live on alms like birds, destitute of all possessions. Like hinds who are misled by the enchanting music of the hunter, we ignorant Gopīs accepted as true the honeyed words of that Cheat and repeatedly experienced the smarting pain of love engendered by the tantalizing touch of His nails. Therefore, O messenger, no more of this talk; let us introduce some other topic. [In the meantime the bee leaves her side and moves in another direction and

comes back soon. The Gopī, therefore, turns to it again and addresses it in a different strain now.] O friend of our beloved Lord, have you come again sent by our beloved Friend? You are my honourable guest; ask of me what you would. Ah! it seems you want to take us by His side. But you know how difficult it is to part company with Him once you have met Him. Moreover, how are you going to take us to Him? You know, gentle one, His beloved consort Lakṣmī is always beside Him and abides in His bosom. O tell us, dear friend! whether our beloved Lord is now at Mathura having returned from Ujjain. Does He ever remember His father's house, His other relations and the cowherds of Vraja? Does He ever talk of us, His humble servants? Will He ever place on our crown His lovely arm having the fragrance of aloe-wood? (12—21).

Sri Suka said: Hearing these words of the Gopīs, who were thirsting to see Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava comforted them with the messages of their beloved Lord and spoke to them as follows. (22).

Uddhava said: Gopīs! you are indeed highly blessed and accomplished of all purpose, and deserve the praise of the whole world; for you have dedicated your heart and soul to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Charitable gifts, fasts, austerities of various kinds, offerings to the sacred fire, repetition of sacred texts and the holy names of God, study of the Vedas, practice of self-control and so many other virtuous acts are all intended to engender devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It has been your happy lot to develop, and show the way to, an unsurpassed devotion to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa of unsullied fame,—a devotion which is not easily attainable even by ascetics. It has been your happy lot to woo the Highest Person under the name

of Kṛṣṇa, severing the ties of home, children, husbands and other relations as well as your own person for His sake. O blessed Gopīs, you have attained absolute and whole-hearted devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and your separation from Him has proved a great boon to me inasmuch as it has conferred on me the proud privilege to have a glimpse of it. O blessed Gopis! I am a confidential servant of the Lord and have borne a message from your beloved Friend, which will bring delight to your heart. Please listen to it. (23—28).

The Lord says: There could be no separation between you and Me, the all-pervading Lord. As the five elemental substances, viz., ether, air, fire, water and earth are inseparably present in all beings, even so as the basis of mind, the vital airs, the five elemental substances, the senses and their objects, I too permeate them all. By dint of My own Māyā I manifest Myself as the elemental substances, the senses and their objects and also as the support of them all; and again, assuming the role of an efficient Cause I create, sustain and dissolve My own being in the form of this universe. The Ātmā or the Self is pure consciousness, altogether distinct from Māyā and its products, undifferentiated, unsullied, and untouched by the three Guṇas; yet it appears as Viśwa, Taijasa and Prājña through the states of deep sleep, dreaming and wakefulness, which are the three aspects of the mind produced by Māyā. Man should realize that the objects perceived through the senses while waking are as unreal as those seen in a dream; he should then control the mind which dwells on those objects, as well as the senses, and renouncing the dreamlike objects like one who has arisen from sleep realize Me. With the wise, study of the Vedas, practice

of Yoga, discrimination of Self and the non-Self, renunciation, austerities, self-control and truthfulness—all these have their culmination in My realization, even as all rivers find their way to the sea. Although I know I am the apple of your eyes, I have chosen to live so far from you simply in order to draw your mind closer to Me, so that you may constantly think of Me and remain absorbed in My remembrance. For you know the mind and heart of lovers, particularly of women, does not cling so devotedly to their beloved who is quite at hand and whom they always have before their eyes, as to him who lives in a far-off place. In this way by devoting your mind, which is completely freed of all other thoughts, entirely to Me and by constantly thinking of Me you will before long attain Me. You are aware, O blessed ones, how those good ladies who had to stay away in Vraja under compulsion while I sported in these woods at night, and were thus deprived of the privilege of joining My Rāsa dance eventually attained Me through contemplation of My exploits. (29—37).

Sri Suka said: The Gopis were transported with joy to hear the words of their beloved Lord. The message revived their old memories and they spoke to Uddhava thus. (38).

The Gopis said: It is a matter for congratulation that Kaṁsa, the sworn enemy of the Yadus, who were subjected to hard persecution by him, has been slain with his followers. And we are further gratified to learn that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is now quite happy with His relatives and friends who have all their objects accomplished. But tell us one thing, dear Uddhava; does Śrī Kṛṣṇa love the women of the town as dearly as He loved us, greeted by our loving and bashful

smiles and gentle looks ? He is an adept in the art of making love and is a favourite with fine women; how will He be able to resist the charms of those women, who will surely captivate Him with their honeyed words and amorous gestures ? One thing more, noble Uddhava; does our beloved Govinda occasionally remember us rustic women in any connection in the course of His confidential talks in the company of the ladies of the town ? Does He ever recall those pleasant nights when He sported with us, His beloved companions, in Brindaban, which looked so charming with its blossoming water-lilies and jasmines and was brightened by the rays of the full moon, and when we sang His delightful stories and danced with Him in the Rāsa circle resonant with the jingling of anklets ? Uddhava, you tell Śrī Kṛṣṇa we are burning with the fire of grief caused by His separation; will He ever come and revive us by His loving caresses even as the god of rain brings life to a dry forest by despatching clouds full of water ? But why should Śrī Kṛṣṇa come over here, now that He has obtained a kingdom, exterminated His enemies, married royal princesses and is now quite happy in the midst of His relatives and friends? Moreover, what purpose could there be for the high-souled Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Lakṣmī, who has His desires ever fulfilled and is perfectly contented, to be served by us, who dwell in forest, or by any other women ? Though a public woman, Pingalā has rightly observed that it is the happiest thing to be rid of all hopes and desires. Even though we know this, our longing for Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot be got over. Ah ! who could bear to forgo the privilege of enjoying the confidential talks of the most glorious Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the contact of whose person is not abandoned by Lakṣmī

even for a moment notwithstanding His own indifference. The streams, the hills and the woodlands that we constantly have before our eyes have had the privilege of being frequented by Śrī Kṛṣṇa accompanied by Śrī Balarāma; our cows have been pastured by the two Brothers and the music of the flute that we constantly hear is deeply associated with Them. Moreover, every inch of space included in this land of Vraja is adorned with Their footprints, which are the repositories of beauty and grace. All these repeatedly put us in mind of the Darling of Nanda; by no means can we forget Him. Oh ! our mind and heart has been stolen by Him by His graceful gait, merry laughter, playful glances and honeyed words; how, then, could we manage to forget Him ? O Lord ! O Consort of Lakṣmī ! O Protector of Vraja ! O Govinda ! You have so often ended our miseries. Pray lift up Your Gokula from the ocean of grief in which it finds itself plunged. (39—52).

Sri Suka said: Relieved from the anguish of separation by the messages of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Gopīs now realized Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be their very Self and as such beyond sense-perception. They then paid their respects to Uddhava, and received him with great hospitality. Uddhava stayed in Vraja for a few months in order to assuage the grief of the Gopīs and delighted the whole of Gokula by singing the stories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sports. The number of days Uddhava spent in Nanda's Gokula passed like so many moments with the residents of Vraja in talks of their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa. That great devotee and servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa passed his time in great delight visiting the streams, woods, mountain valleys and the trees in blossom and reminding the residents

of Vraja of the many sports of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with which those places were associated. Uddhava was overjoyed to witness with his own eyes such distressing agony of the Gopis' mind on account of their intense love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He bowed to them and sang of them as follows. (53—57).

"The birth of these Gopa women alone is blessed and laudable on this earth inasmuch as they have developed such deep-rooted love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Soul of the universe,—a consummation sought after not only by seekers of truth afraid of transmigration, but even by great sages and realized souls, as well as by us, devotees. What need is there for one who has developed such fascination for the stories of the infinite Lord to be born many times as a Brahman ? (Or if one fails to develop such fascination for the stories of the infinite Lord, it is useless for him to be born many a time even as Brahman.) These Gopis are women in the first place, and thus have not undergone any purificatory rites; they roam about in woods and have thus no fixity in life; and on top of this they have their character vitiated by conjugal infidelity inasmuch as they loved Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a Paramour. For them to have such absolute devotion, such deep-rooted love for the divine Śrī Kṛṣṇa ! What a strange phenomenon ! This shows that the Supreme Lord confers the highest blessing on all those who betake themselves to Him and love Him, no matter if they do it without realizing His divinity, His real character; even as the elixir of life cures all those who take it, whoever they may be. The unique favour which was bestowed on these milkmaids of Vraja, who enjoyed during the Rāsa dance the highest blessing of having about their necks the divine arms of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was not ob-

tained even by Lakṣmī, who is so deeply and exclusively attached to Him, much less by the celestial damsels, whose complexion and fragrance of person vie with the lotus. Would that I were born as one of the shrubs, creepers or herbs of Brindaban, which come in contact with the dust of feet of these highly blessed women, who abandoned their relations as well as the path of respectable women and resorted to the loving personality of the divine Śrī Kṛṣṇa, sought after even by the Vedas ! The lotus feet of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa are adored even by Lakṣmī, as well as by divine personages like Brahmā, Śiva and others, and sages who have accomplished their object in life, and are also worshipped by great Masters of Yoga in their heart. The Gopis had the unique privilege of placing those very feet on their bosom in the circle of Rāsa dance and assuaged the agony of their heart by embracing them. I bow again and again to the dust of feet of the blessed women of Nanda's Vraja, whose constant singing of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's stories purifies all the three worlds." (58—63).

Sri Suka said: Uddhava now took leave of the Gopis as well as of Nanda and Yaśodā and bade farewell to the Gopas, and then mounted his chariot with the intention of proceeding to Mathura. As he started from Vraja, Nanda and others came up to him with many presents in their hands and said to him with great affection, tears flowing from their eyes, "Let all the thoughts of our mind, O Uddhava ! centre round the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and let our speech be constantly engaged in uttering His names and our body in bowing to Him and in similar other worshipful services. Wher- ever and in whatever womb we may be born hereafter, tossed by our own Karma and the

Lord's will, may our delight be found only in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Ruler, as a result of our good works and charitable gifts." Parikṣit! thus entertained by the Gopas and Gopīs with their devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Uddhava came back to Mathura, which enjoyed the

protection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Bowing to Śrī Kṛṣṇa he described to Him the intense love and devotion of the residents of Vraja and placed the presents before Him, as also before Vasudeva, Śrī Rāma and King Ugrasena. (64—69).

Chapter XLVIII

ŚRĪ KRĀṢṇA'S VISIT TO TRIVAKRĀ AND AKRŪRA

Sri Suka said: Now Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the all-witnessing Soul of the universe, remembered the promise made by Him to pay a visit to the house of Trivakrā, the maid-servant of Kaṁsa, who was burning with passion for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and went to her house with the intention of fulfilling her desire. The house of Trivakrā was furnished with costly furniture, was full of articles tending to inflame the fire of passion, and was decorated with strings of pearls, bunting, wreaths of flowers and canopies. It was provided with beds and seats, perfumed with scented fumes and unguents of various kinds, and illumined with lights. Seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa coming to her house she rose immediately from her seat in great excitement of joy, received Him with due ceremony along with her companions and honoured Him by offering Him a suitable seat and other courses of worship. Uddhava, who accompanied the Lord, was likewise suitably honoured by her. He, however, simply touched the seat offered to him and sat on the floor; while Śrī Kṛṣṇa, following the ways of the world, immediately took His seat on the costly bed lying there. In the meanwhile Trivakrā took her bath, anointed her body with cosmetics and scents of various kinds, dressed herself in a costly attire, put on valuable ornaments on her person, adorned herself with garlands of flowers,

and scented her mouth with betel-leaves and nectar-like beverage. In this way she prepared herself for a meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and then approached Him with bashful and sportive smiles and graceful looks. Trivakrā was naturally shrinking with shyness on account of her first meeting with the Lord. Śrī Kṛṣṇa therefore called her to His side, and catching hold of her hand adorned with bracelets set her on the bed and indulged in amorous sport with her for the little merit she had earned by willingly offering Him sandal paste. Trivakrā took up the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in her hands and smelled them and brushed off the anguish of her heart by placing them on her bosom and breasts, which were burning with passion for Him, as well as on her eyes; and clasping to her bosom her beloved and blissful Śrī Kṛṣṇa with both arms she completely got rid of the pangs of her long separation from Him. Parikṣit! by simply offering Him some sandal-paste Trivakrā had thus secured the presence of that Supreme Ruler who is the dispenser of liberation and whom it is exceedingly difficult to attain. Yet unlike the Gopīs, who asked for nothing else than the privilege of service, that unlucky woman made the following request to Him: "Stay here for a few days, my most beloved friend," she said, "and make merry with me. I cannot bear to

forgo the pleasure of your delightful company, O Lord of lotus eyes." Parikṣit! Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the supreme Lord of all, and knows how to oblige others. Accordingly He granted her the boon of her choice and honoured her with suitable presents and sweet words, etc., and then returned with Uddhava to His own abode, which had now become an object of adoration to all. Parikṣit! Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Ruler even of the lords of the universe such as Brahma, Śiva and others, and is very difficult to please. He who having pleased Him asks of Him the trivial pleasures of the world is indeed a man of perverse understanding. (1-11).

On another day Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Almighty Lord, accompanied by Śrī Balarāma and Uddhava, proceeded to Akrūra's residence just in order to oblige him and to take some work from him. From a distance Akrūra saw these Jewels among men, who were his own relations and friends, got up and went ahead to receive Them, and with great joy greeted and embraced Them. He made his obeisance to both Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and They in Their turn saluted him along with Uddhava. When they had taken their seat, he worshipped them all with due ceremony. Parikṣit ! Akrūra first of all washed their feet and sprinkled his own head with that water, and then worshipped them with offerings of various kinds including clothes appropriate to gods, sandal-paste, garlands of flowers and costly ornaments, bowed to them with his head bent

low, and taking their feet in his lap he began to rub them. And in humble devotion



and modesty he spoke to them as follows. (12-16).

"It is a matter for deep gratification that the wicked Kaṁsa has been killed along with his followers. In this way You have rid Your clansmen, the Yādavas, of a calamity that was so difficult to get over, and have further raised their position and power. You two are Prakṛti and Puruṣa, the causes of the world as well as the world itself. Without You two there exists nothing that may be called a cause or effect. O Great Being ! it is You who have created this universe and having entered it with Your own powers, it is You who appear in endless forms that are seen or heard of. The different classes of beings, both animate and inanimate, are constituted of the five elemental substances such as earth, water,

etc.; and it is these substances which having entered into their being appear differently in the form of these different beings. Even so it is You, the Absolute Self, uncontrolled by others, who appear variously in various forms of Your own making. Through the three Guṇas—Rajas, Sattva and Tamas—, which are Your own powers, You create, sustain and destroy the universe. Yet You are not bound by these Guṇas or by the works that are performed through them, since there is nothing that could bind You, pure consciousness as You are. Being unconditioned by the body and other adjuncts, the Ātmā or Spirit, that You essentially are, can have no birth and death nor can it be differentiated in any way. Hence there can be no bondage or liberation for You; it is our ignorance varying according to our own mental approach that imposes them on You. This eternal religion of the Vedas was taught by You for the good of the world. Whenever it is assailed by miscreants who hold and preach heretic doctrines, You assume the quality of Sattva in order to guard it against such wanton attacks. It is under similar conditions, O Lord, that You have this time descended into the house of Vasudeva here with Your partial manifestation, Śrī Balarama, in order to remove the earth's burden by destroying hundreds of armies of Asuras born as kings and to expand the glory of Yadu's race thereby. O Lord who is beyond sense-perception! All gods, manes, evil spirits and rulers of men are Your own manifestations; and the waters washing Your feet (the Ganges waters) purify all the three worlds. Nay, You are the father and preceptor of all. Our houses are, therefore, highly blessed today since You have visited them. Lord! You are the beloved of devotees, true to Your word, friendly to all and keenly alive

to services rendered. Which wise man would resort for protection to anyone else than You? You grant all the desires of Your sincere and loving devotees; nay, You bestow on them Your own Self, which is free from growth and decay, which is always the same. O Lord who removes the suffering of His devotees and frees them from the bondage of birth and death! the true state of Your being cannot be easily attained even by Masters of Yoga and the lords of celestials such as Indra and others. How blessed, therefore, we are in having You directly before our eyes! Lord! we are bound by ties of attachment to our children, wives, wealth, relations, houses, body and the like, which is nothing but a display of Your Māyā. Be pleased to cut these bonds asunder." (17—27).

Sri Suka said: Thus worshipped and praised by His devotee, Akrūra, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa smilingly spoke to him as if enchanting him with His magic words. (28).

The Lord said: "You are a friendly adviser, an uncle, and a worthy relation to us; whereas we are your children always deserving your protection, fostering care and tender affection. Persons seeking true welfare can do no better than constantly wait upon most blessed and highly adorable personages like you. Saintly persons like you are even higher than gods; for while gods are generally guided by self-interest, saints and holy men are not so guided. Sacred waters alone do not constitute a place of pilgrimage; nor are gods confined to images of stone and clay alone. They purify a man through a long process of time, whereas holy men purify one at the very sight. You are one of such holy men and are, moreover, the foremost of our friends and well-wishers. We should, therefore, like you to proceed to Hastinapur with a

view to ascertaining the welfare of the sons of Pāṇḍu and in order to confer a blessing on them. On the death of their father those children along with their mother, Kuntī, were reduced to a sad plight and were brought back, I am told, (from the Sataśringa mountain, where Pāṇḍu died) by King Dhṛtarāṣṭra to his capital and are now living with him there. King Dhṛtarāṣṭra is not only blind but weak, and is under the thumb of his wicked son

Duryodhana. He, therefore, cannot deal fairly with his nephews. Please go there and find out whether the treatment of Dhṛtarāṣṭra towards the Pāṇḍavas is of a welcome nature or otherwise. On ascertaining the real facts we shall take further steps to see that they are happy." Having thus instructed Akrūra, the Almighty Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned to His palace along with Śrī Balarāma and Uddhava. (29—36).

Chapter XLIX

AKRŪRA'S DEPARTURE FOR HASTINAPUR

Sri Suka said: Akrūra accordingly went to Hastinapur, which bore many traces of the glory of Paurava kings. There he saw King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Bhīṣma, Vidura, Kuntī (mother of the Pāṇḍava brothers), Bāhlika and his son (Somadatta), Dronāchārya, Kṛpačārya, Karṇa, Prince Duryodhana, Aśvatthāmā, the Pāṇḍava brothers, and other friends and relatives. Akrūra met all these friends with appropriate honours and they questioned him about the welfare of their friends (Vasudeva and others) at Mathura and he, too, in his turn made similar enquiries about their own. He stayed there for a few months with a view to ascertaining the conduct of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who lacked in moral strength and was, therefore, guided by his evil-minded sons and easily gave way to the machinations of wicked people like Śakuni and others. Kuntī and Vidura told him everything about the attempts made upon the lives of the Pāṇḍavas in the form of administering poison, etc., by the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who were envious of their cousins' imposing demeanour, energy, physical strength and valour, modesty and other

virtuous qualities, as well as of the love the subjects bore them, and further told him about the future designs of the Kauravas against the Pāṇḍavas. (1—6).

Kuntī had the sweet associations of her home revived by the visit of her cousin Akrūra, and approaching him with eyes full of tears said: "Do my parents, brothers, sisters, nephews, brothers' wives and friends remember me, dear brother ? Do my dear nephews, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the lotus-eyed Balarāma, who always extend a protecting hand to those who seek Their protection and are so kindly disposed towards Their devotees, ever think of Their cousins, the Pāṇḍavas ? You know I am sorrowing in the midst of my enemies like a hind in the midst of wolves; would Śrī Kṛṣṇa ever care to comfort me and these fatherless children with words of consolation ? Kṛṣṇa ! O Kṛṣṇa ! O great Yogi ! O Soul of the universe ! I am in great distress with my children, O Protector of the World, and seek Your protection. Pray come to my rescue, O Govinda ! For men who are afraid of this world, which is surrounded by death on all sides, I see no asylum, O

Supreme Lord, other than Your lotus feet, which vouchsafe liberation to all. O Kṛṣṇa ! You are the absolute Brahma, the Oversoul, the Lord of Yoga and Yoga itself. I bow to You and take refuge in You." (7—13).

Sri Suka said : Parīkṣit! thus remembering her kith and kin and above all Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord of the universe, your great grand-mother, Kuntī, was overcome with grief, and wept aloud. Akrūra and the glorious Vidura, though both of them looked on pleasure and pain with an equal eye, sympathized with her and comforted her by reminding her of the superhuman origin of her sons and the great object of their birth. By this time it was clear to Akrūra that King Dhṛitarāṣṭra was partial to his sons and dealt out a step-motherly treatment to his nephews. He, therefore, approached him while leaving for Mathura, and delivered to him in the midst of his relations and friends the friendly message of his well-meaning relatives, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. (14—16).

Akrura said : O son of Vichitravirya ! it is up to you to expand the glory of your race, now that the death of your brother Pāṇḍu has secured for you the throne of Hastinapur. By ruling the earth with equity and justice and pleasing your subjects by your virtuous conduct, and by treating your kith and kin with impartiality you will attain prosperity and renown. Acting otherwise you will incur opprobrium here and will be condemned to perdition hereafter. Therefore, you should treat your own sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu alike. One cannot remain inseparably united with anyone for ever, O king !—nay, not even with one's own body, much less with one's wife, children and others. A creature is born all alone and all alone does it depart from this world; and all alone does it gather the fruit of its meritorious and evil deeds. The ill-gotten wealth of ignorant people is appropriated by others going by the name of those that deserve to be fed and nourished,

even as the water of ponds, etc., which constitutes the very life of aquatic animals, is consumed by their relations. The life, wealth, children and others, which the foolish man nurtures as his own self by unrighteous means, ultimately desert him even when he is unsatisfied. He who abandons his Dharma or sacred duty is obviously ignorant even of his own interests; for he is not only deserted by all those whom he regards as his own self, as pointed out above, and leads a life of discontentment but he carries with him even to the other world the load of sins that he has incurred and goes to perdition. Therefore, O king ! know this world to be a mere dream, a delusion, a fancy; and controlling your mind with your own will cultivate impartiality and serenity of mind, O ruler of men. (17—25).

Dhritarashtra said : O magnanimous Akrūra ! as you address these words of friendly advice to me, I do not feel satiated with them, like a mortal that has obtained the immortalizing nectar. Your delightful words, however, O dear friend ! fail to make any lasting impression on my fickle mind, which is full of partiality through attachment to my sons. Who could possibly set aside, even indirectly, the decree of the Supreme Lord, who has appeared in Yadu's race with a view to relieving the burden of the earth ? The ways of the Lord's Māyā are indeed inscrutable. Through it He creates this universe, and entering it apportions duties as well as the fruits of actions. His sportive nature, incomprehensible as it is, keeps the wheel of creation ever going. To Him, the Supreme Lord, I make my obeisance. (26—29).

Sri Suka said : Having thus sounded the mind of King Dhṛitarāṣṭra and obtaining leave of his friends, Akrūra returned to the capital of Yadava kings. He apprized Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma, O Parīkṣit ! of the conduct of Dhṛitarāṣṭra towards the sons of Pāṇḍu, for which purpose he had been sent. (30—31).

Editors' Apologia.

It has given us very great pleasure that we have been able this year to present our readers with a running translation of a portion of the great Purāṇa, *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*, as the ninth inaugural number of the *Kalyana-Kalpataru*, under the caption of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Lilā Number—I. The portion published in this number represents Part I of Skandha X of *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. God inclining, it is our intention to publish Part II of the same Skandha as the tenth inaugural number of the *Kalpataru*. Had it been possible to publish both the Parts together, our readers would have got the whole of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Lilā, as depicted in the *Bhāgavata*, all at once in one extensive volume. But it has not been possible for us to do so. Apart from the difficulty of faithfully translating such an extensive volume within a short time, the present abnormal times when printing materials are getting more and more scarce, did not appear to us opportune for the publication of a heavy volume. This accounts for the comparative smallness of size of our present number. We trust looking to the crisis through which the world is at present passing, our readers will kindly excuse us for this shortcoming.

Among all books of scripture recognized as authoritative by Hindu religion, *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* holds a unique and distinctive place. According to one view it is the most authoritative commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras*, by Maharsi Vedavyāsa himself, the author of the *Brahma-Sūtras*. It has been described, again, as the ripest fruit of the wish-yielding tree, namely, the Vedas. Proceeding, as it did, from the lips of Śrī Śuka, the son of Maharsi Vedavyāsa, whose

name stands proverbial in Hindu religion as the wisest sage and the greatest ascetic, its nectarean value has been immensely enhanced. Or, struck by the beak of a Śuka (parrot), it has been made extremely delicious, for it is well-known that a ripe fruit tasted in the tree by a bird is made exceptionally delicious. It is the supreme scripture of the Bhakti school, or the school of Devotion. In the absence, in the physical sense, of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme World-Teacher, it is His representative on earth. For Śrī Sūta made the announcement in the *Bhāgavata* itself (Sk. I, Chap. III) that this Purāṇa manifested itself in order to dispel the gloom of Kaliyuga, after Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa had withdrawn Himself to His Supreme Abode with all Dharma and spiritual Knowledge. And while the *Bhāgavata* is the essence of the Vedas, Skandha X of *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* is its very heart.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Lilā will be relished by our readers in its true spirit if they constantly bear in mind the repeated declarations of the Hindu scriptures that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was God Himself appearing on earth in His fullest manifestation. This idea of the descent of God on earth is a special contribution of Hinduism to the world's spiritual thought. In His immanent state God is present everywhere and in everything. In fact, He is both the instrumental and material cause of the Universe. Matter as we see, feel and know it, has evolved itself from Spirit, and derives its existence from the existence of the Spirit. In that sense, the Universe itself represents the Virat or Cosmic Form of God. Hence though all is but Spirit, the Universe, as we know it, is Spirit encrusted

with Matter. Man in his bondage is also spirit encrusted with Matter. His bondage is shattered when he can establish himself in his true self, or the Spirit. All other religions have recognized that God sends His messengers to redeem man from his bondage. But Hinduism while recognizing the advent of divine messengers from time to time, has gone a step further in affirming that not only His messengers, but God Himself also comes down to earth to sport with His devotees or lovers. The *Bhāgavata* confirms this when it declares—

अनुग्रहाय भूतानं मानुपं देहमस्थितः ।
भजते तादृशाः क्रीडा याः श्रुत्वा तत्परो भवेत् ॥

(*Bhāgavata* X. xxxiii. 37)

"The Lord manifests Himself as a human being, and acts like a human being, in order to bestow His grace on Jivas, so that hearing of His sports they may attach themselves to Him."

This brings us to the very secret of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Līlā and its importance to men like us living in the grip of Matter and constantly swayed by the impulses of Matter. This Līlā is delicious even to freed souls who are privileged to participate in it. Being enacted on the plane of the Spirit it is ever-present, unchanging and eternal; for Matter changes, not the Spirit. But although this is so, it is beyond the competence of ordinary mortals like us to judge it from the point of view of a freed soul. We, who live on the plane of Matter, our greatest spiritual problem is to raise our thoughts to the realm of the Spirit. For a man is, in fact, what his thoughts are. He is gross and material, if his thoughts are gross and material. He is spiritual, if his thoughts are spiritual. The greatest problem of religion in all ages has been to sublimate the thoughts of man from the realm of matter and raise them to the realm

of the Spirit. From this point of view, it appears to us, there is nothing more powerful in the spiritual literature of the world than this description of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Līlā in the *Śrimad Bhāgavata* as an aid to grip one's mind and heart for the practice of Divine Remembrance at all hours of the day and night. In the *Gītā*, the Lord says—

अनन्यचेतः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थं नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥

(VIII. 14)

"O Arjuna, he who constantly meditates on Me, without ever thinking of anything else, to that Yogi always absorbed in Me, I am easy, i.e., easily realizable."

Again,

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मन्मार्जी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवेष्यसि युक्तवैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥

(IX. 34)

"Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, make obeisance to Me; thus uniting yourself to Me, and surrendering yourself wholly to Me, you shall come to Me."

This fixing of the mind on Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Supreme Yoga. For, the Lord, again, says in the *Gītā*:—

मध्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासने ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्तमा मतः ॥

(XII. 2)

"To Me they are the best Yogis, who, possessing supreme faith, worship Me with the mind centred on Me, ever absorbed in Yoga."

Again,

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्भेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्तमो मतः ॥

(VI. 47)

"Among all Yogis, he who with faith worships Me, with his inner self focussed on Me, is, in my opinion, the very best."

The story of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Līlā as depicted in the *Bhāgavata*, when read with a heart full of faith and reverence, will bring about

this Yoga, or Union, of the reader with Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We feel extremely blessed, indeed, that we had the privilege to edit and bring out this number.

There are people who having read the *Bhāgavata* without faith in Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divinity have raised questions of moral propriety with reference to certain sports of the Lord as depicted in this scripture. The stealing of butter, the stealing of Gopis' clothes and the great Rāsa-dance mainly form the butt of their criticism. This criticism has its use as a warning against unripe souls making wrong use of the texts of this highly spiritual book and thereby bring about their spiritual doom. Śrī Śukadeva sounded this note of warning himself when he said, "the weak man should never think of such acts, and far less perform them. If through ignorance or perversity they dare indulge in them, their ruin is certain". But applied to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, the criticism is quite pointless and undeserving. As Śrī Śukadeva, again, says, "O Parīkṣit, turn your thoughts on the character of God. He who abides as Ātmā in the heart of the Gopis, in the heart of their husbands, nay, in the heart of all creatures invested with a body, He who is the Witness, the Supreme Lord of all, it is He who is sporting manifesting His divine, transcendent Form.....O Parīkṣit, the men of Vraja never found fault with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Kept spell-bound by Yogamāyā, they saw their wives all along by their side." This is with reference to the great Rāsa-dance. Similarly, the realization of the fact that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Self (Ātmā) of all, that He is in all, and He is everything, will absolve Him from the other two charges, though as steps in progressive union with Him, the

incidents are full of deep spiritual import. The criticism arose, and will arise, only in a mind which is prone to make the error of judging the Ātmā (Soul) with the yard-stick of gross Matter. Let such critics deeply ponder over the words of Brahma Himself, the creator of the world :

"O Lord, You are totally free from the taint of the world, and yet You descend on earth, and act on the stage of the world imitating the ways of men only with a view to spreading the current of infinite bliss among Your devotees.....Those who are capable of knowing Your glory, let them know it; to me, however, it is something beyond the reach of my mind, speech and body. O divine Śrī Kṛṣṇa, You are the witness of all, You are omniscient. You are the Lord of all the worlds; the entire creation rests on You. What more shall I say to You? Please accept me at Your sacred feet."

(*Bhāgavata* X. xiv. 37-39)

The translation appearing in this number of this sacred scripture has been done by our editorial staff on the basis of the Hindi translation of the texts appearing in the *Bhāgavata* number of the Hindi 'Kalyan'. We are, therefore, responsible for all its shortcomings and defects. We are conscious that the learned reader, well-versed with the Sanskrit text of the *Bhāgavata*, may find many defects in this translation done under pressure of time. While craving forgiveness for unintentional errors, we may assure our readers that no effort has been spared to represent faithfully the spirit of the original scripture, as we have understood the same. We express our deep gratitude and indebtedness to Syt. S. Subba Rau, M. A., from whose translation of the *Śrimad Bhāgavata*, we derived much help in the final preparation of the present translation.

An Appeal to our Readers

हरे राम हरे राम राम राम हरे हरे ।
हरे कृष्ण हरे कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण हरे हरे ॥

Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare,
Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare.

Readers of the *Kalpataru*, who study the journal with any amount of attention, must have formed some idea in their mind about the infinite glory and potency of the Divine Name. The scriptures proclaim that even a single Name of God when uttered in the proper spirit can deliver one from worldly bondage. The great sinner Ajāmila attained the Supreme Abode by uttering the Divine Name 'Nārāyaṇa' during his last moments, even though he took that name with the object of summoning his youngest son Nārāyaṇa to rescue him from the hands of the emissaries of Death. The Name is, indeed, described as a veritable wish-yielding tree. The shadow of its effulgence flashing within the cavity of the heart dispels the grossest darkness and removes the vilest sins. The scriptures, again, describe the Name as divine in essence, All-pure, All-perfect and eternal, the embodiment of Knowledge and Bliss, for they assert that the Name of God and God Himself are perfectly identical.

In this age of Kali, man has no other support than the Divine Name. It is, therefore, that an appeal is issued every year to the readers of the *Kalyan* and the *Kalyana-Kalpataru* to practise the Japa of the Name for two months or more with a view to develop the habit of Japa. Last year we made an appeal to our readers to complete the Japa of the Mantra given

above 10 crores of times from the middle of Pauṣa to the full moon in the month of Phālguna. The enthusiastic supporters of the *Kalyan* and the *Kalyana-Kalpataru* not only completed this number but reached the unprecedented figure of 50 crores of Japas about which intimations have been received by our office.

We, therefore, humbly renew the appeal this year also for a combined repetition of the Mantra 10 crores of times, and earnestly hope that our readers who have faith in and love for God will take up this sacred work from January 3, 1942 to March 2, 1942, the full moon day of Phālguna this year, by not only participating themselves in this supreme Yajña of Kali age—the practice of the Japa of the Divine Name—but inducing others as well to participate in it. The rules are briefly as follows:—

It is not essential that the Japa should be performed during any particular period of the day or while seated at the place of worship. From early morning when you leave your bed till you go to sleep at night, you may carry on the Japa of this Mantra in any position, whether sitting or moving about, or even while you are engaged in any other activity. For counting the number you may either hold the rosary of beads in your hand or carry it in your pocket. Or, you may develop the habit of remembering the number with every repetition of the

Mantra. If through illness or otherwise there is a break in the daily practice of Japa for which the practicant gives his pledge, he should try to have the number completed by a friend. If no such arrangement is possible, the practicant is requested to send an intimation to that effect to the address noted below, so that arrangement for the completion of the vow undertaken may be made on his behalf. If for some unavoidable reason there is a break in the Japa and the practicant fails to get it done by another, or even to send an intimation to that effect, there will be no harm. Japa done in a disinterested spirit does good and nothing but good. Disinterested practice of Devotion, even though meagre, does not go in vain, and succeeds in ridding the practicant from the greatest fear—the fear of rebirth. We have every hope that if the readers of the *Kalyan* and the *Kalyana-Kalpataru* take up the work in right earnest, we shall receive sufficient intimations about the performance of this Nāma-Japa sacrifice throughout the country. We, therefore, expect every reader to participate in this spiritual work with his whole heart and soul.

1. From whatever date the reader may start the Japa, it should be completed on the full moon day of Phālguna (corresponding to March 2, 1942).

2. Men and women of all nationalities, all classes and all ages from the child to

the old man can undertake the Japa of this sacred Mantra.

3. An individual desiring to participate in the Yajña should repeat the Mantra at least 108 times (*i.e.*, till one complete round of the beads of a rosary has been counted).

4. Readers who organize the Japa should send us information about the number of daily Japa that they are able to organize. The names of performers need not be mentioned. Only the correspondent who sends the information should send his name and address.

5. The full Mantra consisting of 16 Names and not one Name only should be regarded as unit for purposes of calculation. For instance, if the practicant undertakes to do one Māla of Japa daily, he will be required to repeat the whole Mantra 108 times and deducting 8 as allowance for errors the total amount of Mantra-Japa he will be reckoned to have performed in the course of one day will be 100. The total amount of Japa for the whole period should be computed in this way from the date of commencement of Japa to the end of Phālguna.

6. All intimations are to be addressed to:—

NĀMA-JAPA DEPARTMENT,

KALYAN OFFICE,

Gorakhpur, U.P.



ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANAM KALPATARU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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निजशक्तिमित्तिनिर्मित-

निखिलजगजालचित्रनिकुरम्बः ।

स जयति शिवः परात्मा

निखिलागमसारसर्वखम् ॥

—Āchārya Śrīkanṭha

That Śiva is all-glorious, the Supreme Self, the essence of all the Scriptures, who has drawn on the wall of His own energy the frescoes of the entire universe.



Fear—A Spiritual Deterrent

BY FIROZE C. DAVAR, M.A., LL.B.

Faith in the Lord is the first rung of Jacob's ladder, the ladder of spirituality, and this first of virtues inspires hope in the aspirant to attain to Divine Grace. The truth-seeker's courage is however in proportion to the measure in which he has imbibed the two virtues, and it is ultimately his courage to achieve noble ends that takes him through toil and trouble to his final goal. Scepticism very largely deprives a man of his hopes, enervates him in energy and dulls the resolution to perform good and benevolent deeds. Such a person is uninspired by courage but is a victim to doubts and fears, which prevent him from bearing his present ills with due fortitude but induce him to fly to others that he knows not of. Fear is a cancer in the body spiritual which engrosses the mind of man in itself instead of enabling him to discharge his duties to God and man. Fear never cures evil; it only anticipates and invites evil, which may not appear at all, and even if it does, fear aggravates and magnifies it out of all proportion. A person may be destined to be happy, but fear will not permit that destiny to fulfil itself. It has been well said that disbelief is a misnomer, for after all disbelief is belief—in the want of belief! So too fear is not disbelief but rather belief in something—in evil instead of in good; and thus a timid, fearful man, even when virtuous, is unconsciously playing in the Devil's hands. In the list of 'divine properties' mentioned in the *Gītā* (XVI. 1-3), the first place is

occupied by fearlessness, and according to the fifth verse these divine properties lead to liberation, and the demoniacal to bondage.

To people leading a decent worldly life, fear of poverty or heavy financial losses is an ever-present bogey: fear of loss of health, old age, infirmity and consequent dependence on others is another fruitful source of unhappiness. Fear of loss of reputation and popularity often frightens people into submission to time-honoured conventions, of the absurdity of which they have already been convinced, though they are too afraid to express their views in public. The fear of being implicated in a crime, though completely innocent, has often driven virtuous people to the verge of suicide. And finally the fear of death of self and our dear ones unmans us completely, vitiating the joys and intensifying the sorrows of life. Fear is not a preventive, nor a curative, nor a sedative, but a slow poison that makes life, particularly spiritual life, impossible. The truly spiritual, however, have never been afraid of public censure, but have always longed for the approbation of their conscience. As H.W. Longfellow remarks:—

"Not in the clamour of the crowded
street,
Not in the shouts and plaudits of
the throng,
But in ourselves are triumph and
defeat."

Old age, infirmity and dependence are terrible evils even in the thought, but

the cure lies not in fear but in a very high degree of spiritual strength, which may enable the person to live in the soul, not in the body. This however can be achieved by the most devoted Bhaktas of God, who are more conscious of the Self than of their own physical ills. In fact the stubborn disease of fear yields only to spiritual medicine, and the more a person advances on the Godward path, the more fearlessly does he face the problems of life. Complete faith in God and resignation to His will would dissipate all apprehensions about actual or imagined evils. A faithful and loving wife never suspects the character of her lover, even though he be morally degraded but when God Himself is the Lover, of whom of course degradation or wickedness is unimaginable, fear on the part of a true devotee must be entirely out of place. He would only take his troubles in the light of so many tests or as a Heaven-sent retribution for his own past misdeeds.

Fear and hatred usually go together. A person fears him whom he hates, and fears him in proportion to his own hatred. A bully is invariably a coward: he hectors a weakling only to cringe and cower before one stronger than himself. The most belligerent nations in the world are most in fear of external aggression, and fear, suspicion and hatred lead to a deplorable, all-round multiplication of armaments. Another great cure for fear therefore is love for mankind. St. Francis of Assisi could domesticate a rapacious wolf by his love, while H. D. Thoreau's tender regard for the squirrel could induce the shy little animal to feed from his hands. During the recent communal

riots in our country instances have been recorded of high-souled and non-violent individuals of either community fearlessly frequenting the streets inhabited by the other without danger to life or limb. Love and non-violence are inseparable and their closest associate is fearlessness. It is often seen that when a person is overpowered by fear he has resort to violence: this explains the serpent's anxiety to sting man and the latter's eagerness to destroy the reptile. Fear and love cannot co-exist and as recorded in I John IV, 18:—"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear."

Fear arises usually in the heart of the wrong-doer, who is afraid of the law, and, if conscientious, afraid of the justice to come beyond the grave. Fear is an unmistakable symptom of wrong-doing as tremors are of malarial fever, and both can be cured. No attempt should ever be made to conceal an offence, for in such cases secrecy is itself a crime. Extreme candour alone may set the offender right with the public, and the law may then be permitted to take its course. Not fear but boldness and readiness to take the consequences, however appalling, constitute the proper remedy. There is a further need of sincere repentance as also of the unflinching resolution not to sin again in the same direction. Instead of weeping over spilt milk and the unmanly surrender to fears about social censure or punishment of the law, the wrong-doer will derive considerable solace by cleansing his conscience through his frankness and repentance. There are numerous and serious misdeeds unrecognizable and therefore unpunishable by law; or even when legal steps can be taken, the

rigours of the law can often be evaded by the devices of an ingenious counsel. But though this saves a man's face before the public, it cannot save his soul before his Maker. Earthly authorities may be hoodwinked through brilliant but perverted cleverness, but the inner tribunal of the offender has already passed judgment against him. Fear of wrong, actually perpetrated, will continue to haunt the person all his life, and tend to be more oppressive if attempts are made to stifle it by further dishonest means. In order to dispel fear, the penalty of the offence must be paid and the consequences boldly faced through confession and repentance.

Even persons of good character are sometimes betrayed into wrong by vainly trying to justify the misdeeds of their sons or relatives, and then the fear of the consequences of their attitude makes them uneasy throughout the rest of their lives. But sons are given to be educated and advanced on the path of righteousness, and not to clog the wheels of their parents' spiritual progress. If, unfortunately, a father is led away into a deliberately false and partial justification of his son's objectionable behaviour, no better remedy could be suggested than a frank confession to all concerned and sincere repentance and devotion before the Lord.

Fear is however necessary in the initial stages of human evolution for unregenerate or undeveloped natures, that are not susceptible to love or amenable to discipline in other ways. A certain amount of fear has to be instilled in some characters for it often acts as a salutary force for a time, till the person

concerned is open to reason and persuasion. Fear is necessary for the time being only as the precursor of love, for kings and generals have often to be feared and respected by their subjects and armies before the former succeed in winning their hearts by generous and kindly deeds. The tiger in the circus is starved till he tamely submits to his keeper's orders; the child is threatened with the cane if he stubbornly refuses to obey his teacher; the savage is compelled by repressive measures to observe discipline if he wishes to live in society; and the criminal is held in check by fear of the law which is immediately put into operation against him in case of insubordination. But the perpetual starvation of tigers would only result in their death, and the constant flogging of children would be the surest way of transforming them into dullards. It has to be remembered that we all evolve from the brute to the human and thence to the divine kingdom. Fear is therefore for the time being useful as a force in all early stages and with all unregenerate characters till it opens their hearts to the appeal of kindness, which would have fallen flat on such persons had it not been preceded by fear. Similarly restraints are necessary to prepare the way to true freedom while law will in a completely evolved society seek its fulfilment in love.

We are often asked to fear the Lord and His punishment. But why fear anyone at all unless we have wronged him? Only the sinful therefore need fear the Lord in proportion to their sins. It may be argued that even the saintliest persons are not without their slips, and

that a perfectly sinless person is as unfamiliar to the world as the Egyptian phoenix. True, but though sinlessness be a rarity, we can still return from our sins to the righteous path by clearing our conscience through candour, repentance and the firm resolution not to repeat the offence. After this is accomplished, it is needless to go on fearing the Lord. God has often been imagined as a Judge, but we are never afraid of judges or police officers till we do something wrong, cognizable by law. It is absurd to move in perpetual fear of such persons when we lead a normally honest life. But God has also been conceived as a Father, and a father's forgiveness may be counted upon, though not that of the Judge, who is unable to forgive even though he may wish to do so. Instead, therefore, of moving in constant fear of the Judge, why not incessantly love the Father, attempt to fulfil His will, and thereby exorcize the ugly phantom of fear from our hearts ? It is essential to transform doubt into faith, fear into love, despair into hope, and evanescence into immortality, before we set our feet on the path of salvation.

The complete eradication of fear, though not impossible, can only be achieved by the greatest of Yogis. The root of fear lies in the self, which weaves a vast and complicated worldly web in which the soul is enmeshed. If the soul can renounce the web of self and gaze upon it as a mere worldly illusion, fascinating but futile, there will be no cause for it to fear the distortion or even destruction of a thing from which it is now wholly detached. The *Gitā* (XVIII. 9) equally emphasizes non-attachment and relinquishment of the fruit of action

as leading to true renunciation, required of a Yogi. A man with a purse of gold will hesitate to pass through a forest for fear of robbers and wild animals: if however he feels that life and wealth are given to him in trust to be used for the good of others and not for selfish pursuits, he will carve his way fearlessly through the densest jungles. He will not be thrown into agonies by public censure if his conscience is clear, nor will he stand paralysed into inactivity at the deathbed of his son if he feels that "the Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away."

Fear and pain very largely arise from attachment to self and selfish occupations, from the vain notion of possessiveness and the false sense of pride and satisfaction that issues therefrom. It is impossible to possess an object without simultaneously fearing its probable loss; he alone who makes use of the object just because the Lord has permitted him to do so according to His will, will have little reason to bewail its disappearance, for he was always conscious of its temporary tenure, never of its permanent possession. The best way therefore is to be an ascetic at heart, to use all things and yet cultivate a sense of detachment from them as if they were never ours but only given to us on loan by the Lord. If that frame of mind is acquired and the sense of possessiveness is snapped, fear will automatically drop from us like a creeper falling in the dust when the tree round which it had twined is cut down. Thus it is only the far-advanced Yogi, wholly detached from the self and all that it implies, a spectator not an actor in the drama of life, that can complacently behold scenes of grief, pain, loss and bereavement and completely subdue the sentiment of fear.

The Path of Devotion

By SWAMI ASESHANANDA

What is Devotion? Various definitions have been adumbrated by different sages. According to Śrī Vedavyāsa delight in worship is the test of devotion. Śrī Gargāchārya says attachment to talks of His glory is the mark of devotion. In the opinion of Ṛsi Śāṇḍilya, constant remembrance with unflickering love is the sign of devotion. Ardour in His worship is permissible provided it does not hinder the enjoyment of bliss which the soul finds in God. But Devarṣi Nārada holds that the distinctive feature of devotion lies in heartfelt consecration of all actions to God and a poignant feeling of anguish when His blessed presence is denied. He cites the example of the milkmaids of Brindaban, who dedicated their whole life to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and felt extreme pain when He went out of their sight even for a short while. They are the true picture of Bhakti. They left their hearth and home, friends and relations, the moment they heard the clarion call from the divine flute. They enjoyed His blissful company from the inmost core of their heart. But lo! when the Lord disappeared from the scene of pastime, how terrible was their grief, how overwhelming was their suffering! They languished and pined for the homecoming of their Beloved. Day and night, they passed, shedding sorrowful tears. Such madness of love the world has seldom seen! Meditating on them and emulating their noble example saints like Nammalvar, Śrī Chaitanya and many other Vaiṣṇavite teachers have entered

into the realm of ecstasy and enjoyed ineffable bliss. They went into rapture which found practical expression in soul-stirring songs and hymns of thrilling praise. But the definition which comes from the mouth of Prahlada, the prince of all devotees, is the noblest and the best. The words he uttered in the form of a prayer will throw enormous light and give us a glimpse of his inner sentiments. 'May that uninterrupted attachment which the worldly have for the objects of the senses be my share when I reflect on Thee and Thy charming beauty. May only undying faith have a permanent niche in my heart. Let not woes and sorrows of thousand rebirths take away even the minutest portion of my mind elsewhere excepting the lotus of Thy blessed feet.'

Bhakti-Mārga is the easiest and simplest of all paths. It can be practised without any difficulty by a householder or a Sannyāsi, a reputed scholar or a common, ignorant man. No hard austerities and extreme asceticism are necessary. It does not preach a gospel of world-negation. It does not countenance any exclusive creed. There is no ring of pessimism—no tone of defeat and despair. It is a message of hope, strength and exuberant joy. It is a creed to be practised in the din and bustle of society, in the midst of thousand cares and anxieties with head uplifted and spirit elevated. A votary of this path must not wrench himself away from family ties and shirk the responsibilities of his

station and avocation. He must not foolishly turn away from active, energetic life and embrace a comfortable and easy course by betaking himself to a cosy corner of the forest. He must pay heed to the warning of the Preacher of the *Gitā* who denounces in unequivocal terms the life of a misanthrope—the man who forsakes his duties for fear of hardships and trouble. He calls him a hypocrite and a veritable drone of society. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has no mercy for such a misguided and incorrigible shirker. But, on the other hand, He has all compassion and pity for a sincere worker—a day-labourer—who lives an honest life by the sweat of his brow and has nothing to offer but blood, tears and toil. The tragedy of his miserable life is too hard for Him to bear for is He not the saviour of the fallen and friend of the poor and the lowly? He comes of His own accord to lighten his burden and remove the tears with His own affectionate hand when the shafts of misfortune have deeply and ruthlessly pierced the forlorn soul. The Lord has promised in the *Gitā*—‘न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति’ ‘Know thou for certain that My devotee will never perish’. Irrespective of caste, creed or colour whoever takes refuge in Him is sure to be saved. Even if the most sinful surrender to Him and adore Him with undivided heart soon he will be transformed and become a virtuous soul. The door is open to all and everyone can attain the grace of the Master if he is sincere and truly humble. If a devotee flies to the Lord for shelter with all his heart, he will certainly be redeemed and absolved from all sins. At the conclusion of his instructions Śrī Kṛṣṇa

imparts the most secret teaching which the Śrī Vaiṣṇavas consider as the ‘Charama Śloka’—the last word of the *Gitā*—when he says “Surrendering all duties come to Me alone for shelter. Do not grieve, for I will release thee from all iniquities. Thou shalt surmount every difficulty by My grace. Fear not.”

Bhakti can be divided into two kinds—Para and Apara, or primary and secondary. Secondary devotion is born of desire and is threefold according as the devotees are distressed, inquisitive or selfish—“Arta, Jijnāsu, Arthaṛthi”. Primary devotion is selfless, unmotivated and absolutely unadulterated. The devotees of this type are known as ‘Ekānta-bhaktas’, who have only one end in view, namely, God. They do not care for anything but service of God. Their love is single-minded, whole-hearted and illumined by the light of Knowledge. They are the wise devotees according to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He considers them as the best among His followers. These high-souled persons deem Vāsudeva as all in all—“वासुदेवः सर्वमिति” and never deviate from worshipping and remembering Him. Of them, Devarṣi Nārada writes in his Gospel of Love called *Bhakti-Sūtras*—“They ever converse with one another of their love with a choking voice, with tears in their eyes and a thrill in their bodies. Purified are the families of such men; and purified is their land. They make holy places holier, virtuous actions more virtuous and sacred books more sacred. At their birth the spirits of their ancestors get satisfied, humanity feels delighted and the world attains its comforters.” They are suffused with the spirit of God. They are filled with His

presence. They live, move and have their being in God. They see Him alone, hear of Him alone and meditate on Him alone. They become virtually God-intoxicated leaving far behind the clamour of the senses and the passionate appeal of this sordid world. They make no distinction of rank or profession, sect or nationality, for their magnanimous heart views all as the children of God. Rightly does Saint Rāmānanda say—“Let no man ask his brother's caste or sect. Whoever adores God is his own.” They aim at giving the highest character of franchise to all mankind. The sublime catholicity of their outlook has uplifted many a fallen soul and liberated many a profligate sinner from the meshes of carnal love and temptations.

But how to realize God and become a true Bhakta? All our scriptures unanimously say—through repetition of His Name and prayer. Life is short. Time is fleeting. Nobody knows when death will overtake us. In the midst of all uncertainties death is the most certain thing in the world. Not a single minute should be wasted without prayer since we have very little time after what is spent for our physical needs. We should listen to and sing the glory of God either alone or in the congregation of the devotees. We must shun the company of men of undesirable character as we would shun poisonous snakes. We should avoid evil company and frivolous talks of the atheists who gloat over their pampered sensuous life. We must build our house on the solid rock of meditation. ‘यज्ञानं जपयज्ञोऽसि’—“I am Japa among the Vajñas”—says Śrī Bhagavān. Japa is repeatedly calling God by His most

favourite Name. Of all sacrifices and ceremonies of worship, chanting of His Holy Name crowns all. When it proceeds from the heart the votary gets a new thrill and enters into the joy of Divine communion. Christ reiterates the same statement when he exhorts—“Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.” Prayers if they are whole-hearted will surely be answered. To realize God is not a very difficult task for a man of faith. He pins high hopes and absolute confidence in the words of the Lord. He remains unshaken in the midst of Himalayan dangers and appalling catastrophes. Nothing can move his invincible and invulnerable faith. He repeats ceaselessly, “O Lord! I do not want wealth, nor even health. I do not want rank, nor even fame. Let me have all the sorrows and miseries that the world can give. I care not. But let not my mind waver a little in reposing absolute confidence in Thee, O, the King of my heart.” He has drunk, to the full, from the cup of love and has become inebriated in the name of God. He has become deathless by tasting the nectar of devotion, and the disease of the world can touch him not. He really fulfils the conditions and possesses abundantly the characteristics to become the chosen favourite of the Lord—“A devotee is greater than an ascetic. He is greater than even a man of Knowledge. He is superior to a man of action. But among the devotees, he who full of faith, with the inner self abiding in Me, adores Me, is considered by Me to be the best. He is the most beloved of Me.” He is deemed to be the very self of the Lord. His loving and

lovable personality is extremely dear to God. A living example of that ideal was typified in the character of Śrī Rāma-krishna, the saint of Dakshineswara. Of him a great man writes—"The story of his life is a story of religion in practice. His life enables us to see God face to face. No one can read the episode of his life without being convinced that God alone is real and all else is transitory. Ramakrishna was a living embodiment of godliness. His sayings are not those of a mere learned man but they are pages from the book of life. In this age of scepticism Ramakrishna presents an

example of a bright and living faith which gives solace to thousands of men and women who otherwise would have remained without spiritual light."

To conclude:

अनन्याश्विन्तयन्ते मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

(Gītā IX. 22)

"Those single-minded devotees, who constantly thinking of Me, worship Me disinterestedly, to those ever united in thought with Me, I bring full security and Myself attend to their needs."

Man is Divine

By R. SITARAM AIYAR

The common saying that man is human has so often been said and written that it has become jarring to one's ears and benumbs the joy of one's existence. Similar is the consequential saying that man is liable to err. My view is that much of the dejection, despondency and helplessness that permeates the Hindus in general is the natural result of such sayings. Man must visualize before his mind's eye that one Supreme Being who created this Universe and pervades the same and is the author of his coming into existence. He has, therefore, all the qualities of his Maker. Man must, therefore, realize that he is divine and not human. When this idea possesses him he begins a new life, a life full of energy and vitality. The cast of his life becomes fundamentally different. His

life is completely divinized. His life becomes dynamic and nothing becomes for him impossible of achievement. The word 'impossible' ceases to exist for him. His words, thoughts and deeds originate with the central idea that man is divine and partake of the divinity that generates them and can never be impure or ignoble. They get tinged with the idea of divinity and hence become fit to be dedicated unto God. There can be no room in him for disregard or hatred. He perceives no opposites nor duality. His heart is full of love which is joy. His face always radiates an abiding smile. Every moment of his life is felt as divine. He becomes happy by making others happy. He finds his real happiness by service and sacrifice. He sheds light and joy upon everyone and thus fulfils his life's mission.

Linking with Infinity

By LALJI RAM SHUKLA, M. A.

The human soul is not content to live a finite life in which it finds itself at the dawn of consciousness. Everyone wants to live larger life. Everyone wants to gain the admiration and respect of others. In other words, we are not content to live in the clay tenement in which we find ourselves confined, we want to get out. He really has not lived at all who has lived merely a personal life. A man of whom no one other than himself thinks is as good as dead.

Just as we want to live in the mind of our contemporaries, even so we want to live in the mind of those who are to come after us. Great sacrifices are made so that the world may remember us. Rich people give away their property to gain a name that may live after them. Thought of charity among common people are inspired by a desire to gain immortality. The soldier fighting a battle and facing all odds, the scientist working alone in a laboratory, the enthusiastic preacher running day and night to bring certain valuable reforms in society, all want to gain immortality. All this is a manifestation of the desire to link oneself with infinity. The human soul wants to live in infinite space and infinite time. Hence comes a desire to be thought by those who are living and those who are to come after we are dead.

Now the question is: how best can we link ourselves with infinity. Are there some acts that would be known to all the people of the world or be re-

membered for all time to come. Surely there are none. Nothing can give us that immortality which we are ever aspiring for. The deeds of Napoleon occupy several volumes in the present century, in the coming century they will occupy a few pages of a book, and when four or five centuries have passed they will not occupy even a para and after a few more centuries even the name will be forgotten. The world does not remember even its best benefactors for all time.

How then can we gain real immortality or link ourselves with infinity? Not by very astounding deeds but by greater enlightenment of the soul. We have to annihilate the desire to make the finite immortal, then alone can we gain immortality. The infinite alone is immortal. Are we not nourishing two contradictory desires when we want to gain immortality on the one hand and remain finite on the other? If we want to be remembered for ever as so and so, the desire is silly. For all finite forms must meet the same end. It is a question of time when the one or the other will be destroyed.

Linking with infinity is possible by doing things that we are required to do for the service of God who lives in all. Nature conserves its best products. If we want that certain good thoughts that have occurred to us should live, let us give them to the world so that they may become other peoples'

thoughts. In fact, all the thoughts are the thoughts of God. We gain them from Him and they will continue to live in the Infinite mind for ever. Similarly, every noble work will live. A noble work produces a desire in others to do similar work. We should be content with creating such a desire in others. These others will do nobler actions than what we did. If any act of ours has been of that much value we ought to think that our life has not been a failure, for we have thus linked ourselves with infinity. The only real service that one man can do to another is to arouse in him a desire to act nobly. This gives him a knowledge of his own worth. He becomes aware of the God in him. Just as a burning lamp lights thousands of lamps, and has the capacity of lighting infinite number of lamps; so a God-inspired soul can arouse Divinity in millions of men and make them God-like. He should not expect that these people should depend on him for all the time for their Godliness, or should remember him. It would be expecting the infinite number of lamps to burn with the light of the first lamp. Every lamp burns by its own power. It has its own light, though it is true that without being ignited by another lamp it would not have burnt at all. But having once been ignited, it does not all the time require the support of the first lamp. In a similar way life is communicated from one individual to another. If one wants to link oneself with infinity let him have the light himself. If even a few others have gained that light from him, it will live for all time; these

transmit it similarly to others. In this there is true immortality.

What things are so as the world cannot do without? To this question we get the answer none. God can do without everything we think to be indispensable. At the same time even the smallest act is very precious, for small actions are ladders to great actions. They are the foundations on which the edifice of grandeur is built. There is the statesman directing the destiny of a nation, there is the commander directing the course of the enemy. Their actions outwardly are more precious than those of a mere school teacher or of a soldier. But without the valuable work of the latter, the worth of the former will be nothing. The writer is often told, "why do you not do something which will make you remembered. The things which you are actually doing can be done by any ordinary mind. If a man has worth let him do some extraordinary deed." He keeps silent; for here very often there is difference in the fundamental outlook. What is considered small should not be thought of as small. The greatness of an act does not lie from the spiritual or moral point of view in its overt character, but on the motive that inspires the act. Let everything that one does be done with the highest sense of duty. Let him think that it is that action alone that will make him remembered by others. It is these everyday small acts that give true worth to the human soul. For greatness is a thing of everyday, and not of holidays only. Let us be aware that God alone puts worth in an act. What great things may arise out of an ordinary act

one cannot guess. To think that the thing which one's hand is finding to do is the only thing that he ought to do, is the way to link oneself with infinity. "Refuse not the employment", says Carlyle, "which the hour brings thee, for one more ambitious. What distinguishes the master is the using of the tools he

already has rather than looking for better ones or those that others have used well. The highest Heaven of Wisdom is near alike from every point, and thou must find it, if at all, by a method native to thyself alone." This is the most salutary advice for one who wants to do real good to humanity, or serve God.

Some Useful Directions for Pilgrims

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

There are four primary objects of human endeavour, viz., Dharma (religious merit), Artha (worldly riches), Kāma (sensuous enjoyments) and Mokṣa (liberation). Of these, Artha or money is expended when one undertakes a pilgrimage to sacred places. As for the other three objects, viz., Dharma, Kāma and Mokṣa, those who are worldly-minded and have a Rājasic temperament visit sacred places with a view to have their worldly desires fulfilled; while those who have a Sāttvic temperament do it with a view to attaining religious merit or liberation. The latter type of men even practise Dharma in a disinterested spirit for their spiritual regeneration. Therefore, those who have their spiritual welfare at heart should make it a point to visit sacred places with the object of God-Realization alone through self-purification. We give below some rules of conduct for the guidance of those who visit sacred places:—

(1) While going to a place of pilgrimage on foot one should have his mind fixed on the Lord and should keep his speech engaged in uttering His sacred names. In the event of a number

of men journeying together, it would be advisable on their part to chant the Divine Names in chorus. Even while travelling in a railway train or on any other conveyance one would do well to read religious books or repeat the Divine Names in course of his journey, keeping the Lord constantly in mind.

(2) A plunge bath should be taken in sacred rivers such as the Ganges, the Indus, the Jamuna, the Saraswati, the Godavari, the Nerbada, the Cauvery, the Krishna and the Sarju, in lakes like Mansarovar and Pushkar, and tanks like those existing at Kurukshetra and in the mouth of the Ganges (Gangāsāgar) with a view to self-purification and redemption of the soul, keeping the merits, the spiritual potency, the philosophy, the inner significance, and the glory of the Tirthas in mind.

(3) The shrines of Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Śiva, Śrī Viṣṇu and other deities, existing in the various sacred places, should be visited with a devout and loving heart and the deities enshrined therein should be extolled and invoked by means of sacred hymns and prayers for self-redemption, bearing in mind the

qualities, glory, divine sports, spiritual essence, hidden virtues and greatness of those deities.

(4) A sincere quest should be made in such places for saints and sages, enlightened souls, holy men, Yogis and devotees with a view to deriving special benefit from their interview, association and service, offering salutations to them, and listening to their instructions, discourses and talks. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa addressing Arjuna says in the *Gītā*—

तदिदि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेश्यन्ति ते शार्ण शानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥

(IV. 34)

"Try to acquire that wisdom. By offering salutations, putting questions and rendering services to the wise who have realized the Truth, you will be taught that wisdom by those sages."

(5) One should scrupulously avoid the company of men who are covetous of wealth and women, who make people deify them and offer their leavings of food to them, who seek honour, respect and glory, and who lead a dissipated life and are given to sensuous enjoyments, even if they appear in the garb of a recluse, an ascetic or a Brahmachārī (one who leads a life of strict celibacy and continence); while those who take meat and intoxicating substances, lead an immoral and sinful life and do not believe in the existence of God and the immortality of soul should be kept at a respectable distance.

In some places of pilgrimage pilgrims are greatly harassed by the local priests, owners of temples and Mahantas, etc.

They plague the pilgrims by demanding extortionate amounts from them by way of presents for fulfilling the pilgrimage; by refusing admission into temples and shrines without payment; by disallowing a bath in sacred waters unless one has paid the necessary toll; by extorting money through intimidation and threats of evil consequences for the defaulter; by putting undue pressure on the pilgrims to contribute a larger amount towards the upkeep of a temple or the expenses of a special function such as the feeding of Sādhus, etc., or a sumptuous feast in honour of the deity; by lodging pilgrims in their own dwellings and importuning them to make larger gifts of money; and by defrauding the unwary and over-credulous pilgrims of their money by deifying ordinary birds and making the pilgrims partake of the leavings of those birds, as well as by attributing false miracles such as the quaffing of sugared drinks, etc., to the images of particular shrines. Pilgrims should beware of all these people.

(6) Services of an appropriate nature should be rendered to recluses, Brahmans, ascetics, Brahmachārīs, students, spiritual aspirants, and other worthy men, as well as to those who are indigent, afflicted, helpless, sick and crippled, by supplying them with food, clothing, medicine, religious books, etc.

(7) Regarding objects of sensuous enjoyment and worldly riches and power as ephemeral, efforts should be made to withdraw the mind and senses, controlled through discrimination and dispassion, from their respective objects other than those absolutely essential for keeping the body and soul together.

(8) Special endeavour should be made to perform duties of an obligatory and occasional nature such as Sandhya (daily morning and evening prayers), Tarpaṇa (offering libations of water to gods, R̥ṣis and manes), Japa (muttering of sacred texts and incantations), meditation, worship and adoration, study of scriptures, Havana (offering oblations to the sacred fire), Balivaiśwadeva (offering oblations of food to fire and other deities before meals), etc., at the proper time according to one's own caste and stage in life. Even if it is not possible for any reason to stick to the time fixed for these duties, care should be taken at least to see that they are not altogether neglected. Study of scriptures such as the *Gitā*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, etc., repetition of Divine Names, offering Arghya (water thrown into the hollow of the palms of a deity or honoured guest) to the Sun-god, worship of one's chosen deity, meditation, addressing praises and offering prayers to the Lord, etc., are obligatory for men and women belonging to all castes and orders.

(9) Care should be taken not to inflict the least pain of any kind whatsoever on any creature under the influence of lust, anger, greed or any other evil propensity.

(10) Efforts should be made to observe complete silence all the twenty-four hours except while chanting the Divine Names and studying the scriptures; for a vow of silence is specially helpful to the practice of Japa and meditation. If it is unavoidable to speak in emergent cases, one should make it a point to speak only truthful, agreeable and wholesome words. While defining

askesis relating to speech, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gitā*:—

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाक्यं तप उच्चरो ॥

(XVII. 15)

"Speaking words which do not cause annoyance to others, and which are truthful, agreeable and wholesome, and the study of sacred texts and the repetition of Divine Names constitute what is called askesis relating to speech."

(11) Nothing which is not one's own should be used, excepting of course lodgings and utensils. Even if offered unasked for, nothing should be accepted gratis. While in pilgrimage one should not accept even presents from relatives, etc. As for the practice of using things without the permission of their owner, it is tantamount to stealing. To accept even medicine without paying their cost is equivalent to accepting a charitable gift.

(12) Special care should be taken to observe strict continence through mind, speech and body. A woman should scrupulously abstain from looking at, touching the person of, speaking to or even thinking of male other than her own husband, and *vice versa*. In emergent cases it is permissible for a woman to have a brief talk with a man, and *vice versa*. While doing so one should look upon the other as one's own brother or father, or as one's own sister or mother, as the case may be, and should keep one's eyes fixed on the ground. If one happens to entertain a lustful thought with reference to another, one should observe fast at least for twenty-four hours by way of penance.

(13) While on pilgrimage one should take care neither to possess nor use any article by way of luxury or with a view to leading a life of ease, much less for the gratification of one's palate or for love of fashion and with a view to indulging one's senses. Even food and clothing should be sparingly used just for keeping one's body and soul together and in a spirit of dispassion.

(14) While on pilgrimage one should make it a point to partake of only Sāttvic food such as grain, milk, fruits, etc., cooked with purity and got from one's own earnings. Our dealings with others should be free from self-interest and egoism and should be governed by compassion, humility and love.

(15) While on pilgrimage one should totally abstain from the use of intoxicating substances such as cheroots, cigarettes, tobacco, opium, bhang and other hemp-drugs, cocaine, etc., and impure substances such as onion, garlic, biscuits, ice, soda-water, lemonade, etc.; should not indulge in idle pursuits such as card-playing or playing at dice, chess, etc., and visiting theatrical performances and cinema shows; and should altogether eschew abusive language, bearing tales and speaking ill of others, mirth and raillery, useless gossip and casting aspersions on others.

(16) Particular care should be taken to answer one's calls of nature at a considerable distance from sacred waters and shrines, etc. He who commits nuisance, or even brushes his teeth or rinses his mouth on the banks of sacred rivers and lakes, etc., is not only deprived

of the merit accruing from a plunge bath in, and the drinking of their sacred water, but incurs a positive sin.

(17) While on pilgrimage one should totally give up evil propensities such as lust, anger, greed and infatuation, pride and jealousy, partiality and prejudice, hypocrisy and duplicity, sloth and remissness.

(18) Looking upon both heat and cold, pleasure and pain and agreeable and disagreeable objects as a boon from the Lord, one should remain cheerful and contented under all circumstances and conditions.

(19) While on pilgrimage one should not desert a companion or dependent in serious trouble under the impulse of lust, anger or fear. King Yudhiṣṭhīra did not leave behind even the dog who accompanied him to the Himalayas, considering it his supreme duty to hold by it up to the last, and even spurned the offer of heaven for its sake. Those who leave behind a companion or dependent who is ill and go out for a bath in sacred waters or to visit some shrine incur the displeasure of the Lord instead of earning His goodwill; for, God Himself being the soul of all, callous disregard of a companion in distress constitutes disregard of God Himself. Hence one should under no circumstance desert a companion in distress.

(20) Just as meritorious acts such as ablution in sacred waters, charitable gifts, Japa, practice of austerity, performance of sacrifices, fasting, observance of a vow, meditation, visiting temples, worship and recitation of sacred texts,

service and association with saints, etc., performed in sacred places are attended with high spiritual results, in the same way sinful acts such as telling lies, dissimulation, thieving, adultery and cruelty, etc., perpetrated there become inexpiable. Therefore, care should be taken not to commit the least sin of any kind whatsoever in sacred places.

The scriptures abound in passages describing the glory of sacred places. In the *Mahābhārata*, R̄si Pulastya says—

पुष्करे तु कुरुक्षेत्रे गङ्गायां मगधेषु च।
लाल्वा तारयते जनुः सप्त सप्तावरांस्तथा॥
पुनाति कीर्तिता पापं दृश्य भद्रं प्रयच्छति।
अवगाढा च पीता च पुनात्यासासमं कुलम्॥

(*Vanaparva LXXXV. 93-94*)

"He who takes a plunge bath in the Pushkara lake, in the tanks at Kurukshetra, in the Ganges or in the Phalgu river at Gaya in South Bihar redeems his ancestors as well as descendants up to the seventh generation. The Ganges absolves him who recites her name of his sins, brings salvation to him who looks at it and purifies the man who takes a plunge into it or drinks its water,

along with his forbears and descendants up to the seventh generation."

People begin to take these words as mere words of praise or as hyperbolic expressions; but they should not be taken as such. If we find that these acts do not bear the highest fruit, it is because of our accumulated sins of the past, the present atmosphere of unbelief, the undesirable conduct of priests and the dwindling of faith and love of the generality of people towards the sacred places due to their being contaminated by the presence of hypocrites, unbelievers and men who perpetrate heinous crimes.

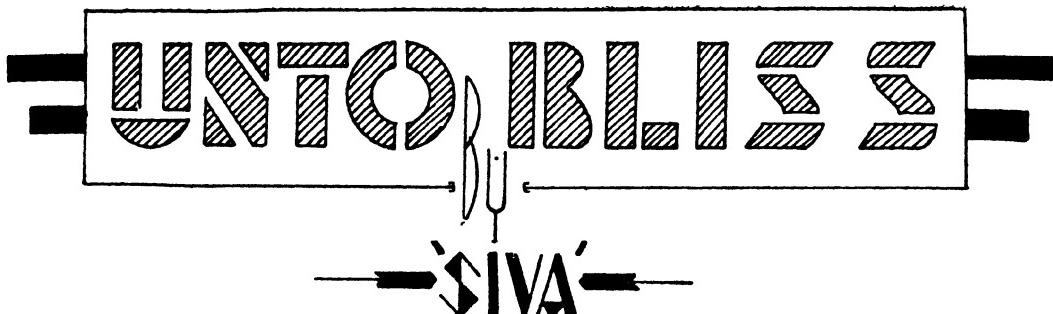
Therefore, avoiding evil company and cultivating faith and love towards the sacred places we should derive full benefit from them by carefully and duly observing the aforementioned rules of conduct. There is not much harm even if we fail to observe these rules fully; but efforts should be made in any case to repeat the Divine Names and meditate on the Lord's form along with His virtues, potency and divine sports constantly at every time and under all circumstances and conditions.

(*Kalyan*)

Glory of Religion

This much I know, looking at life at seventy, men without religion are moral cowards, and mostly physical cowards, too, when they are sober. Civilization cannot survive without religion. It matters little what name we bestow upon our Divinity—Life Force, World Spirit, Elan Vital, Creative Evolution—without religion life becomes a meaningless concatenation of accidents.

—Bernard Shaw.



Believe from the depth of your heart that God is Omniscient and Almighty, that He is the unfailing Friend of all, that He constantly stays with you and that His protecting hand is always ready to give you protection.

Believe from the depth of your heart that God is present within you, that His divine power lies hidden within you. If you desire, you may feel Him within you and may actually see Him and make yourself strong drawing your strength from His inconceivable store of strength.

Believe from the depth of your heart that when you have armed yourself with His strength sin and misery, grief and affliction, distress and sorrow, illusion and worldly attachment have no power to come near you. To overcome you by bringing you under their influence will be a far cry, indeed !

Believe from the depth of your heart that sin and misery attack you only when you turn your eyes from God and God's Power,—when you lose the belief that He actually resides within you.

Believe from the depth of your heart that with the support of God's strength, you may easily overcome mental distress by mental peace, grief by joy, worldly

attachments by dispassion, illusion by wisdom, darkness by light, dejection by gladness, despair by hope, fancy by direct perception, and all sense of want by experience of the sense of eternal divinity.

Believe from the depth of your heart that God is constantly and eternally present within you with complete Peace, complete Bliss, complete Knowledge, complete Enlightenment, complete Joy, complete Hope, complete Dispassion, complete Experience and His complete Being.

Believe all this—and the moment you pray to Him, and remember Him, with this belief, you will find Him ready to make you His own. His spotless Light will light up the path of your life, and you will easily find yourself blessed with the sight of His sweet, enchanting and smiling Face.

Believe that in this very life, during this very journey of life's pilgrimage, you can satisfy the unfulfilled desire cherished by you from eternity and can transform, through realization of God, your limited, finite, sorrowful existence of a Jiva into an existence which is by nature great, infinite, boundless and blissful.

The Theory of Fulguration or Emanation

A Study in the Pancharatra Concept of the Deity

By K. C. VARADACHARI, M. A., PH. D.

Before we enter into the details of the schools of Pāñcharātra, certain general statements about the whole Tantra literature may be made. It is surely an extensive literature pertaining to the practices of certain rituals simplified no doubt from those of the Brāhmaṇas and Vedas but without conservative regulations as to caste, age or sex. Though liberal in this respect it is undoubtedly, on the other hand, strict in its exacting principles without following which there can be no progress but certainly all danger. For if the path be quickest, it is also the steepest; and to take a false step without understanding and without the full instruction of a Guru, the path may open into a chasm from which to recede would perhaps be impossible.

The theism of the Tantra centres round the importance of the Goddess or the mother-aspect or Śakti-aspect of the Divine, which it holds to be more important than the Divine Himself. The Kubjaka Tantra says "Not Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra create, maintain or destroy; but Brāhma, Vaiṣṇavī and Rudrāṇī. Their husbands are but as dead bodies." The Tantra-śāstra, however, is insistent about the absolute unity between Śakti and Śiva and as the Śaktyananda-Tarangiṇī says, "the Parabrahma, Devī, Śiva and all other Devas and Devīs are but one and he who thinks them

different from one another goes to hell."* This intimate unity which obtains in the external world, Tantra shows to consist in the world of man's body also. The correspondence which Tantra enunciates is also the foundation of the statement that Śakti-Kuṇḍalinī in the Mūlādhāra of the individual is the Devī, and that she seeks in Yoga to unite herself with her lord who is always at the Sahasrāra, the crown of the head of the human being. This achievement of the Śakti-Kuṇḍalinī as she unites herself with the Śiva at the crown of the head is the real achievement of freedom of the individual. The individual is merely Śiva seeking union with Śakti.

The monism is enunciated characteristically at all stages, but the duality of the Śakti-Śiva is almost kept inviolate. The unity is referred to as the organic unity of Ardhanārīswara, and yet in Tantra the theory of Māyā though converted is not suspended; it is merely transcended by this relation of intrinsic mutual determination. The *prakāśa* and *vimarṣa* are inseparable.† Even in *pralaya*, final withdrawal, this relation is by no means annulled; for then only the Devī is passively silent keeping within her womb all the

* Mahanirvana Tantra, Introduction by A. Avalon.

†. Kamakalavilasini.

worlds at the command and will of Iśwara. The worship of the Mother or the Devī is all through inculcated by the Tantras; and the Pāñcharātras, which form the Vaishnavite section of the Tantraśāstra, have fully shown that they sought the ideal balance in the eternal union of Śiva with Śakti or Śrī with Viṣṇu, and in that union and by that union the world evolution proceeds and fructifies. The theory of grace which is one of the most important contributions of the Tantraśāstra is due to the recognition of the mother-aspect or Śakti-aspect of the Divine. Whilst the monistic tendency of Śankara did influence Tantra, the individual selves have been equated with the Supreme; but Tantra never annihilated the individuals at all, since it was truly theistic and aimed at union with the highest through the intercession on behalf of the individual of Durgā or Lakṣmi.

The theistic thought at this point not only leaves as much room for multiplicity as there are functions, but also it makes for a complete Unity, and severely warns that all forms of worship ultimately refer and apply to the one Divine and not to separate Kalas or expressions. Though the theory of Tantra is certainly Unity, it is not bare identity; and it is mostly an attempt at giving a more comprehensive and real statement of the Adwaitic position. After all even monism cannot ask for more than what Tantra asks for. Tantraśāstra is preeminently realistic, though its equally idealistic statement consists in affirming the organic monism obtaining between Śiva and Śakti. The individual being the microcosmic representation of Śiva and Śakti as the inner power who is always resident in him, She leads him to higher perfections and finally to the Khecharī

state. The individual thus finally through devotion and worship must awaken the Goddess within him so that she and through her he himself might be united with the Divine. Before passing to a detailed study of Pāñcharātra, it may be said that the philosophy of Śivādwaita is almost similarly influenced by the Tantra and uses the Śaivite texts. The Śivādwaita is similar thus to the school of Rāmānuja philosophically. But whilst Nilakantha affirms and seeks to maintain that Śiva is the ultimate deity, nowhere does Rāmānuja seek to establish Viṣṇu as the Highest but only Nārāyaṇa, a terminology that is purely philosophic in its usage.

The Viśiṣṭādwaita school is an effort to restate the Tantric position in a new manner which is synthetic. The vision of the Seers of the Vedas and Pāñcharātra school as also the mystic utterances of the Ālvārs are sought to be reconciled (*samanvayāt*). Rāmānuja's acceptance of the Pāñcharātra literature is more definitely known through his rhapsodies in prose (*gadya*), which are only three in number—viz., (1) on Śaraṇāgati (self-surrender), (2) on Vaikuṇṭha (the celestial abode of Brahma), and lastly on Śrī Ranganatha (the God at Śrirangam or the Divine Theatre), than in his Śrī Bhāṣya. Four among the Sūtras are devoted to the system of Pāñcharātra. Śankara holds the view that Pāñcharātra is also discarded since it speaks of the soul as born while in the chapter of Discarding Rāmānuja holds the contrary view that all the rest except Pāñcharātra are refuted.

Whatever be the definite view of the author of the Sūtras, Rāmānuja accepts the view he does because he believes, even as Śankara must along with tradition, in the identity of the author

of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Vedānta-Sūtras*. It is but legitimate that the same author cannot be said to have held two contrary views on the same subject. Rāmānuja therefore quotes from the *Mahābhārata* in support of his position. There is Sāṅkhya, Yoga, the Pāñcharātra, the Vedas and the Pāśupata doctrine; do all these rest on one and the same basis or on different ones ? "Know, O Royal Sage, all these different views. The promulgator of Sāṅkhya is Kapila, Hiraṇyagarbha of Yoga, and Paśupati of the Pāśupata doctrine. All these have human origin. Apāntaratamas is said to be the teacher of the Vedas, who intimates the non-human origin of the Vedas, and finally.....of the whole of Pāñcharātra Nārāyaṇa himself is the promulgator."* "The great Upaniṣad consistent with the four Vedas and in harmony with Sāṅkhya and Yoga was called by him by the name Pāñcharātra. This is excellent, this is Brahma, this is supremely beneficial."† "Thus the Sāṅkhya-yoga and the Veda and Āraṇyaka being members of one another, are called Pāñcharātra;"‡ for in all these doctrines it is seen, according to tradition and reasoning, that the Lord Nārāyaṇa is the only basis."§

Thus according to the view of the author of *Mahābhārata* and the Sūtras, the concept of a personal God is what is sought to be developed and unless modern writers create a duality in the personality of Vyāsa-Bādarāyaṇa there is no way of rejecting this information.

* *Sri-Bhasya* II. ii. 43. p. 529 (Thibaut's Translation).

† *Ibid.* p. 528

‡ *Ibid.* p. 530

§ *Ibid.* p. 531

The theory of Pāñcharātra discusses the view of fulguration (Visfulinganyāya) not in the evolution of the Jivas, as Bhāskara and Yādava Prakāśa hold, but with respect to the Deity Himself who manifests the world. Possessing as He does six primary qualities of perfection which are absolutely His, constituting His essential nature, *Jñāna* (knowledge), *Bala* (strength), *Aiśwarya* (lordship), *Virya* (virility), *Śakti* (power) and *Tejas* (light), each pair among them is manifested in the world as a person for the governance of the world; not that the Deity in each of those forms is without the other qualities, but that He divides his function into so many exclusive expressions. This theory of fulguration is known as the theory of Vyūha. A very illuminative study of this theory is from the pen of Dr. O. Schröder in his introduction to Pāñcharātra and Ahirbudhnya-Saṃhitā.*

The Manifestation of God is recognized to be in fivefold forms for the sake of the devotees, viz. *Para*, *Vyūha*, *Vibhava*, *Antaryāmi* and *Archā*.

1. The *Para* is the Supreme Being, full and whole within Himself, beyond the realms of manifestation or evolution.

2. The *Vyūhas* are the creative functions of the *Para* so divided to guide the world. Sankarṣaṇa has *Jñāna* and *Bala*, Pradyumna has *Aiśwarya* and *Virya*, and Aniruddha has *Śakti* and *Tejas*.† "The creative activities of the *Vyūhas* come into play one after another marking out three successive stages in the creation of the non-pure universe."

* *Introduction to Pancharatra*, p. 37, 34-41.

† *Yatindramata-Dipika*, pp. 84-85 and *Rahasyatrayasara*, Ch. VI.

3. The Vibhava or God as Avatāra is the representative Deity leading the world by his physical presence in the world to higher perfections, suppressing the wrong and exalting the right. Such a God appears somewhat like a finite God fighting against a host of enemies, failing sometimes but triumphing in the end against the foes of Truth. Such Avatāras are considered to occur in every age, a descent of the Deity which is guided by the free will of the Deity and not by the laws of Karma. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa and the rest of the ten Avatāras are considered to be the major descents of this type. The number of Avatāras is countless. As the *Gaudapāda-Kārikā* says, "The God unborn is born in many ways."

4. The Antaryāmī or the God that is in the centre of every being, indwelling in everything and holding all of them in His unique unity (नियन्ता सर्वदेहिनाम्) is the next fulguration. The importance of the Antaryāmī has been well recognized by the Upaniṣads and the conception of entering into the world by the Iśa is the expression of the indwelling nature of the Antaryāmī at the core of all things. Pāñcharātra in recognizing this as important has accepted the Upaniṣadic intuition.

5. The Archā or the image or idol is also considered to be a manifestation of the Deity. This last is the sanction for the worship of the idols in Hinduism. It is considered that God is present at certain places more than others for the benefit of the devotees who wish to have a physical presence of the Deity at all times of worship. "The Archā form consists in the images of the Bhagavān (God) which accommodate themselves to the

various tastes of His creatures for their worship, having no fixed form but that which the worshipper may choose (and this happens to be always a Vibhava form or some other Pauranic or Vedic deity answering to the imagination of the worshipper), having no fixed name but that which the worshipper may choose to call him by, all-knowing but seeming to be helpless and powerless, all-sufficient but seeming as though needy, thus seeming to exchange places (which the worshipper gives and the Lord accepts) and choosing to be ocularly manifest to him at all temples and homes, in short at all times and places."*

It may be the Vedic conception of Henotheism has led to this Pāñcharātra conception and worship. Here, however, the concept is clarified and presented clearly. It is vague and poetic in the Vedas. Idol-worship is presented in a manner that may allow for acceptance. Idol-worship and animism have always that appeal to all the minds of all races of mankind as anthropology and philosophies of religion clearly show. Idol-worship in Pāñcharātra is made significant. Having thus presented God in four perceptible levels in His activity, the aim of Pāñcharātra is to make man a conscious channel of the Antaryāmī on the one hand within himself, and on the other, act for the glory and greatness of the Avatāra outside, and follow the footsteps of the Vibhūti. The starting-point is the Archā, the visible tangible ideal figure, the physical-spiritual form that accelerates contemplation and lifts one to the level of freedom from the lower activities of passion, greed and egoism.

* *Artha-Panchaka*: Pillai Lokacharya (Trans. A. Govindacharya, p. 15).

It may be asked how Rāmānuja, the initiator of realistic thought, could legitimately argue for the theory of manifestation in these five ways of God, who remains always the first or the Para, pure and self-refulgent. It is one of the most important contributions that Viśiṣṭādvaita makes towards the solution of this problem of God. He approaches the problem from the point of mind-body relation. The body is that which is completely being utilized, directed, preserved and enjoyed by a self, for its own ends. This would mean that though there be a deity beyond the realms of creation, yet his presence in the world is possible through governance and power. This external governor is the Naiyāyika God, the *Vyūha* of Pāñcharātra. As the immanent sustainer of the world, God is the causating and purposive principle of the world; the *Vyūha* performs the world duties and evolves the world for its own enjoyment. The *Para* is the eternal unchanging ideal of perfection of the world and is the goal of the individual who through all the vicissitudes and crises of evolution has striven up to the level of egoistic self-consciousness. This evolution upto the limits of egoity is necessary for the further step and in the words of Sri Aurobindo Ghose "ego was the helper: ego is the bar,"* when ego becomes an impediment to self-surrender to the Iśwara (*Praṇidhāna*). The Para is no causating principle except for its initial *Iksāna*, desire, though it is the final inalienable eternal governor of the world.

The next stage in the development of the concept of God is the

* Thoughts and Glimpses: Aurobindo Ghose.

actual descent of the Highest, who guides the world by His actual presence, moral and spiritual, assuming the best forms suitable for the achievement of the ideal enjoyment and fulfilment of the Divine Lila. This is the Avatāra. The Avatāras significantly in India represent ten types of the evolution of the world. The conception is based on the belief that God Himself actually descends amidst various species of beings, as He does as a human being in human society, without being subject to the limitations imposed by birth, for the fulfilment of some divine purpose, which can be achieved only by His direct presence and intervention. It is this conception of the Avatāra that makes Pāñcharātra a valuable system of thought. Pāñcharātra attempts to give the ordinary human being a satisfactory explanation of the wonderful Being, who is so far yet so near, who is transcendent to humanity, but to whom humanity is not an alien sphere to incarnate. It gives as its fundamental explanation the great joy of love that makes the deity such a lovable humane being that He enjoys playing with humanity in its own manner and according to its own likes so that the true fragrance of Divine Love might grow to its full blossom and live.

The next concept embraces the mystic realization of the seers of their oneness, of which we spoke in the previous paragraph, and shows the nearness of the law or the eternal principle. The foundation of law or the core of reality is in the centre of our being. This fact is cosmologically spoken of as the entering (*anupravesa*) of the Iśwara into his creation after he had created the world of names and forms. He becomes the centre of every individual, as he

is the centre of the world. Because it should not be imagined that Prakṛti alone is at the implicit command of the Divine and the individual souls are independent of such a control and sustenance. The Antaryāmī is said to be at the heart of each individual governing and witnessing the actions of the individual and enjoying completely the actions of the individual with a seerlike eye, and leading the individual to higher levels of divine life as He as *Para* destines. In this aspect He is the *Akṣara*, the pervader of all, as Rāmānuja says. The Antaryāmī whom we have considered as Law is not to be considered as merely in terms of external mechanical law but as concrete law which is the embodiment of all moral and spiritual wealth.

The Antaryāmī thus is an actual concrete Being resident at the heart of all creatures, opening the communication with the Highest Being, which is higher status of himself but here present in a different aspect of himself, the moment the individual shows the requisite intensity of purpose to act according to the Highest within himself. This is the call of Sarasvatī in ourselves.* This is the call of the moral conscience, which modern philosophers identify with the ethical purpose or social voice and that most unsatisfactorily. The finding of this Antaryāmī, the highest within us, is the fundamental aim of Yoga and Tantra-śāstra. The *Antaryāmī-Brahmāṇa* breathes the personalistic note that unless this truth is first known, the unity with the world and world-life is impossible and is full of perils. Even a little of this knowledge saves

us from great fear—‘तत्त्वमप्यत्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात्’. In fact, the first aim for the individual is the realization of his true self within himself, the Self true and beyond the superficial self of modern psychology, which finds the self in the compound of tendencies and purposes social, instinctive, hereditary and reflexive.

The true kind of personalism is the finding of the intimate individuality within ourselves. It consists in the realization of our self first. The Antaryāmī is the highest and is the same as the Para, and is the self of our self as the mystics will say. Our real freedom is the co-operative activity consciously realized by us, which becomes in common practice the unity of purpose which we attain with the Highest. At this stage of functioning it does not much matter for the worker or Sadhaka whether distinctness is realized or annihilated, or unity is affirmed or assumed; but metaphysically speaking, the highest is distinct from the individual, which is active only with the power of the highest. “The conception of God residing in the soul but identical with it will be responsible for the apparent Adwaitism of a good many passages in the Pāñcharātra literature,” says Dr. Schroder and not without justice. The true way of mystically dissolving the several enjoyers into the ocean of co-operative freedom and bliss is found in the unity of purposes, however differently the approach towards such an attainment of common purpose with the highest is made, through knowledge or action or love or surrender or placing oneself at the feet of the Lord (*Nyāsa*). Such indeed is the relation between the individual and the highest, namely, that the freedom is assured at the moment he acts in consonance with

* Brih.Up. III. vii. 3.

his own inner law, the Antaryāmī. He is a body as much as the body which we assume to be our own is the body which we sustain and govern. But in another sense "our minds and their bodies" are all the body of the Antaryāmī in consecrated activity. The Adhyatmic realization of Brahma is the pivot on which rests the experience of a synoptic vision of the universe. In such a coalescence with the highest we do not feel the separateness or absolute otherness either with the world or with ourselves. We may say that we do not find the otherness of time or space when we are entirely concentrated within ourselves or lost in the ecstasy of love or as in dreams and trance. The otherness likewise vanishes in common purposiveness or fusion of self with self in love. This losing of the sense of all otherness or myness is a state of splendid *samādhi*, equality of beingness, that homogeneous experience of eternal bliss. It is this fact that is to be borne in mind in interpreting the Pāñcharātra and *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* literature; in fact, every mystic work has to be approached from this point of view. It is because this psychological or mystical at-union is misinterpreted not only by the mystics but also by philosophers so as to avoid a logical distinction, that the experience of reality is said to be relative as to the highest state of the realization

of *Kevala*. Absolute identity is affirmed in ontological solutions. But one ought to affirm a monism with distinctions and not an ontological absolute monism since it is indefensible. Coalescence of content, if content means experience, does not exist, but may exist at certain moments of highest intuition with the divine. But certainly there can be no coalescence of content, if content means substance, with another substance or into another substance.

The system of Rāmānuja accepts the system of Pāñcharātra since it leads the way to the acceptance of human aspiration after the divine and the several fulgurations satisfy the several relatively perfect souls as also the most unreflective but who yet wants a living image, a representation upon which he may lavish all his love. The danger of idolatry consists not in having an idol but that it may lead to pure mechanical worship and also because in trying to concentrate upon the physical aspect one may forget the vast supremacy of the Divine at other levels, and that he may sink into lower worship. Rāmānuja in his works displays his tendencies to appreciate the Antaryāmī more than any other, but he is not so poor as not to appreciate the necessity for the Archā. His Gadyas, on the other hand, show that he appreciated it fully.

The Science of the Soul—IV

(Sri-Bhasya)

(Śrī Rāmānuja's Bhaṣya on the Brahma-Sūtras)

(Continued from pp. 799 to 807 of the December, 1941 number)

BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

IX. Conclusion

It is thus proved that the Vedānta texts prove the eternally existing Brahma and that the fruit of meditation on Brahma is infinite and eternal. In the praise of the result of Chāturmāsyā sacrifice as imperishable (Akṣaya) the word imperishable is used in a relative sense, because scripture definitely teaches that the fruit of all works is perishable.

Therefore the Siddhānta (the settled conclusion) is that, since the fruit of mere works is limited and transient, while that of the realization of Brahma is infinite and eternal, it is proper to begin the enquiry into Brahma to ascertain His nature.

Adhikarana II. Sutra II — 'जन्माद्यस यतः' ॥

2. From whom the origin, etc., of this (universe proceed).

The Sūtra means that the creation, preservation and destruction of this universe which is so incomprehensibly diverse and orderly and contains a vast variety of souls, from Brahmā to the minutest organism, experiencing the fruits of Karma proceed from God who has no imperfections whatever and who has infinite auspicious and blessed

qualities and who is omnipotent and omniscient and who is supremely merciful.

"That from which these beings are born, that by which after being born they live, that into which they proceed and enter: know that: that is Brahma."

(Taittirīya Upaniṣad)

The Pūrvapakṣī (i.e., the opponent) will say that the above description cannot give us a knowledge of Brahma because an attribute must distinguish the subject (विशेषार्थ हि व्यावर्तकत्वम्) and hence plurality of attributes would result in a plurality on the part of Brahma. But does the description that Devadatta is dark and young and red-eyed denote many men? But he may say that unity is known by other means of knowledge and that Brahma is not known through any other source of knowledge (Pramāṇa). If we say that there is such source because only one word Brahma is used, he will reply that as there are many epithets, the conception of one entity will not result simply because the singular is used. He will say that the above-said characteristics cannot define by way of stating Upalakṣaṇa (secondary marks) because such marks bring a fresh knowledge relating to what is known already. But we can tell him in reply that Brahma is

defined in the Upanishadic text as Infinite True Knowledge. (सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म). Even then he will say that there also there are many epithets. The two texts will depend on each other (*Anyonyāśraya*).

The Pūrvapakṣin's reasoning is fallacious. Brahma can be known from the secondary characteristics (Upalakṣaṇas) stated in the Sūtra. They point to what is known to us (by etymology) as having supreme greatness (Bṛhātta). In the *Taittiriya* passage the relative pronoun which is repeated in three forms thus (यते येन यम्) refers to something which is already known. Such previous knowledge rests on the text 'सदेव सोम्येदमग्न आसीद् एकमेवाद्वितीयम्' (*Chhāndogya Upaniṣad*). This shows that Sat alone existed at first. Therefore Brahma is the operative cause and the material cause of the universe (Nimittopādāna Kāraṇa). "It willed that It might become many" (*Chhāndogya Upaniṣad*). The text 'सदेव सोम्य' shows that there was only one material cause. The word 'अद्वितीयम्' negatives the existence of a second operative cause.

Further, there is no force in the objector's objections. The stated attributes indicate Brahma to be different from the contrary attributes. Further, several attributes which do not contradict one another can be the characteristic marks of one substance. The three attributes (creation, preservation and destruction) relate to processes separated from each other by difference of time. They are not mutually contradictory at all. The text यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते (from whom all these beings are born) teaches us that Brahma is the cause of

the creation, etc., of the universe. Of the Brahma so known (Pratimopasya) सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म (He is True Infinite Knowledge) shows that the essential nature (Swarūpa) marks it off as distinct from everything else (सकलतरभ्यावृत्तं सत्यम्). 'सत्यम्' shows that He has non-dependant being and distinguishes Him from matter and embodied beings. 'ज्ञानम्' shows that He has eternal and nonlessening knowledge (नित्यासङ्कुचितज्ञानैकाकारम्) and distinguishes Him from liberated souls who at one time contracted knowledge. 'अनन्तम्' shows that He is free from limitations of place and time and substance (वस्तुपरिच्छेदरहितसत्यम्). He is infinite in nature (Swarūpa) and in attributes (Guṇas). The word 'अनन्तम्' distinguishes Him from all limited but eternal entities. The two texts are not mutually dependant (Anyonyāśraya) as you stated.

To those who say that the Brahma which is desired to be known is Nirviśeṣa (without attributes) Sūtras 1 and 2 would be inappropriate (Asangatam), because Brahma in Sūtra 1 means supremely great and Sūtra 2 calls Him as the cause of the creation, etc., of the universe. None of the Sūtras and the texts on which they are based supports the theory of a Nirviśeṣa entity at all. Reasoning also does not prove such a theory, because it has for its object an attribute which proves and is always with a substance to be proved. Even if the Sūtra is 'जगज्जन्मादिभ्रगो यतः' (from whom is the illusion of the origin etc., of the world) it will not prove a Nirviśeṣa Vastu (attributeless substance), because your Brahma is the Sākṣī (witness) of Avidyā which is the root of all error. Witnessing implies the light of intel-

igence (प्रकाशैकरसता). Light is distinguished from non-sentientcy and manifests itself and others (प्रकाशं तु जगद्ब्यावर्तकम्). So it is Saviśeṣa (with attributes) and not Nirviśeṣa (without attributes). If it is not Saviśeṣa, it will have no Prakāśa (light) and will be void (Tuchchha).

Adhikarana III. Sutra III— 'शास्त्रयोनित्वात्' ॥

3. Because Scripture is the source (of the knowledge of Brahma).

Brahma, being far above the reach of the senses, is known only through scripture. Therefore the text 'ज्ञो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते' (from whom these creatures are born, etc.—*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*) should be accepted as the source of our knowledge of Brahma.

The opponent may here urge that scripture cannot be the source of Brahma because Brahma can be known by other means (अप्राप्ते तु शास्त्रमर्थवत्). But what are those other means ? Not perception through sense-organs as it does not reveal the Supreme Self, nor perception through the mind which can cognize only pleasure and pain and which can relate itself to external objects only through the senses, nor Yogic perception which is only vivid perception of things perceived before (भावनाप्रकाशपर्यन्तजन्मानन्तर्पविशदावभासकत्वम्) but is limited to what had been experienced already (पूर्वानुभूतिपविष्यस्मृतिमात्रत्वात्), nor inference which relates only to things lying within the reach of the senses. But the opponent may urge that inference has application because the universe is an effect as it is made of parts (साक्षयत्) and implies a maker who has a knowledge of the material cause

(Upādāna) and the instrumental cause (Upakaraṇa) and the purpose and the user as in the case of a jar or a pot and because every non-sentient thing is dependent on or ruled by a sentient being as in the case of the health of a body. He can be silenced by pointing out that there is no proof that in every case non-sentient matter needs a sentient being for its origin and preservation (e. g., hills, etc.) and that it is not proved that the health of a body depends on the intelligent principle as it depends on the merit and demerit (Adṛṣṭa) of the man's wife and others and that the parts of a body could keep together as a whole by combination (Samanvaya) and do not need a sentient being for that purpose and that animatedness (प्राणता) is not present in all things (e. g. hills, etc.) and that some things (e.g. chariots, etc.) are set in motion by many intelligent beings and not one intelligent being. Further, it is wrong to say that inference can establish the Maker of the universe because in the instances of a potter, etc., pots could be made without a knowledge of all the powers inherent in the materials, a mere knowledge of the materials being enough and because we can infer the maker of a thing only where such things are producible, and therefore we cannot infer so in the case of hills and oceans which are not producible, and because we see potters have bodies which they use in making pots and have only limited knowledge and hence we cannot proceed to infer therefrom an omnipotent and omniscient Maker of the Universe. To all this the Pūrvapakṣi (objector) may reply that the world is an effect as it is made of

parts and that the hills and oceans are effects though they are big and that an effect must have a cause and that if there is a palace we infer that the architect has wonderful skill and that the body being an effect must have a maker, and that Adṛṣṭa being non-sentient cannot bring about fruits without the guidance of an intelligent being and that the axes, etc., cannot by themselves be pillars and posts and that as ordinary sentient beings cannot see what is subtle or remote and as such perception is needed to create the world there must be a Maker endowed with omniscience. He may argue further that because a potter may not have knowledge of all the powers of the materials or have knowledge of other things, such ignorance is in causal relation to the effect or that other potters may not have such knowledge and that therefore Aniśvaratwa (absence of lordly power) cannot be attributed as a necessary inference to the creator of the world and that inference does not point to the possession of characteristics inconsistent with Iśwaratwa. He may say also that because potters have bodies and make pots, we have no right to assume that God must have a body for creating the universe, as we have seen that demons possessing human bodies and poison which had entered human bodies are removed by will power in this world. He may contend that volition can function without a body and that it depends on mind, which we ascribe to God also, because what proves the presence of a mind endowed with power and knowledge is the presence of its effectuation. If we point out to him that volitions can belong only to embodied

beings, because these only have minds, he may reply that the mind is permanent and can function in separation from a material body. He thus contends that as individuals with their limited knowledge and power cannot create this vast and varied and orderly world, inference shows that it must have been made by God who is omniscient and omnipresent and who has not got a body and whose mind effectuates itself by creating the universe and that thus Brahma is known by a Pramāṇa (means of knowledge) other than Śruti (revelation) and that hence the text quoted (यते वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते etc.) cannot be taken to give us knowledge of Brahma. He urges also that as experience shows that the operative and material causes are absolutely distinct from each other (e.g., potter and clay) and as some substances (e.g., Ākāsa or ether) are not made up of parts and hence cannot be viewed as effects, Brahma could not be said to be the operative and material cause of the universe.

After thus setting out elaborately the Pūrvapakṣa, the Bhāsyakāra proceeds to state the Siddhānta. Brahma can be known from Śāstra (Scripture) alone and not from inference. What proof is there to show that hills, oceans, etc., were created at one time by one creator ? A man makes a jar which is of a limited size. But the whole universe is not one product like a jar but consists of different products, and various effects need different producers and different times of production. Further, how can you infer a creator on the ground that individual souls are incapable of creating this wonderful universe ? We know that

individuals get more power as the result of more Puṇya, *i. e.*, merit. Why should we assume a single creator of infinite power? Nor can it be proved that all things are destroyed or produced all at once. We see things produced and destroyed only in succession in this world. If you say that the attribute of being an effect shows the existence of one omniscient and omnipotent creator, and the attribute belongs to all things as produced together, we point out that all things are not produced together. But if you say that the attribute of being an effect belongs to things produced in succession, then experience shows that things produced in succession have different causes. Thus perception and inference are opposed to your theory.

Further, all living bodies are connected with pleasure, etc., which are the effects of Sattva and other Guṇas, and these effects could be connected with their causes only by the mind of a person possessing Sattva, etc., undergoing modification (अन्तःकरणविकारदरणे). The possession of such Guṇas by a person is due to Karma. So there must be the connection of an intelligent agent with Karma if effects are to arise. Further, the diversity of knowledge and power is due to Karma. (कर्ममूलत्वात्). All this shows that individual souls alone have causality and no inference leads to God.

Further, does the Lord create by means of His body or without it? It cannot be the latter for we have never seen any bodiless being create. Even mental acts occur only in the case of embodied

beings. Further, we do not see the mind of liberated souls creating at all. Nor can the first alternative be possible. God's body must be permanent or non-permanent. If it is permanent that would imply that something made up of parts is permanent. If we admit this, we may as well say that the world itself is eternal and we need not infer God. If the body is impermanent, there would be no cause for its origination. Nor can God be the cause of it, because a bodiless being cannot be the cause of a body. Further, if God has to make an effort, He cannot do so as He has not got a body. If no effort is needed, how can effects come without effort? If you say that the effect has as its causal agent one whose activity consists in mere desire, you would be ascribing qualities not known from experience. We find that attribute in the case of the making of jars. So your inference is refuted by inference based on observation.

It is therefore clear that Śāstra (Scripture) is the only source of knowledge with regard to Para Brahma. Śāstra (Scripture) tells us about a Being who is infinite and omniscient and omnipotent and different from whatever is cognized by the other means of knowledge and to whom there could never be attached any imperfections due to similarity to things known by other Pramāṇas.

In I. 4, 23 and II. 3, 1, we shall show the correctness of the view that God is the material cause and the operative cause of the universe.

(To be continued)

Letter to a Fellow-Seeker

Bhagavan Sri Krishna's Glory

.....The questions you have put in your letter can only be replied partially in a state of union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa's life. This has, among other things, necessitated a delay in replying to your letter. I hope you will kindly excuse me for the delay.

While putting your questions you have flung certain aspersions with a few sarcastic remarks on the life of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa at Vraja, which are not borne out by facts. It is good that you desire to see Śrī Kṛṣṇa in 'a much more glorious form' and that you are grieved to read and hear the 'unholy' account of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's life as has reached your ears. There is nothing wrong about your motive, but to make a vile attack on His life by calling it an 'unholy' thing, without understanding the real significance of the whole thing, is not worthy of a seeker of Truth like you. There are many others like yourself, who desire a purer model of their imagination for the life of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But that is after all an imagination, extremely ridiculous for its audacity to confine Śrī Kṛṣṇa within its own narrow limits. God is God, no standard of the mind, covered by ignorance as it is, can judge or measure His divine deeds.

I would request you to direct your will and thought to devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The force of devotion will, by His grace, purify your mind and, then, you will be able to know something of the greatness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's life at Vraja.

If you wish to probe into His glorious life, read the *Bhagavadgītā* where, you will find, everything pure and perfect. This, however, does not mean that in His life at Vraja there was something which was not pure or perfect. His Vraja-Līlā, on the contrary, represents the height of spiritual glory. But in order to ascend to that height one must at first climb the lesser heights. It is only when one reaches the stage of self-surrender to the Divine, which is the culminating point of the teaching of the *Gītā*, that one is able to proceed further in the upward course. Those who have not rightly understood the pure and glorious message inculcated in the *Gītā* and yet have the temerity to poke their nose into the most glorious of God's Līlās, the Vraja-Līlā, only get their eyes dazzled to find themselves thrown into an apparent darkness caused by the most glaring light of that Līlā which their eyes are not fitted to gaze at. Thus they miss the real secret and question and doubt and dispute the divine character of the thing and readily declare the Līlā to be a pure myth. Thus they dig the grave of their spiritual life, and get buried into it.

These remarks should not, however, give you the impression that I know the truth of the life of Vraja in its entirety. I may state frankly that I do not possess even the knowledge of His glorious life as revealed through the *Gītā*. It is only because you have asked my opinion in reply to your questions that I have

ventured to write a few words. I do not claim that my view is the only correct view. I shall not reply every question separately to meet all your questions which are long enough. I shall put the whole thing briefly, and you will kindly excuse me if any point is left out.

I regard all sports of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the Gopīs entirely true and perfectly holy. I do not think there was the slightest tinge of sexual appeal in them. On the contrary, those sports represent spiritual experience of the highest order which only the most dispassionate, the most perfect masters of spirituality, whose devotion to God is thoroughly single-minded are privileged to have.

In fact, there is no mention of the name of Śrī Rādhā anywhere in the whole *Bhāgavata*. But this fact should not embolden one to imagine and declare that the legend of Śrī Rādhā is a mere myth. To be sure, it is not only a myth, but is true to the very letter. True, the *Srimad Bhāgavata* does not mention the name, but it does not dispute its authenticity either. The *Padma-Purāṇa*, the *Brahmavaivarta-Purāṇa*, the *Garga-Samhitā* and other ancient works of authority have described the Līlā of Śrī Rādhā. Besides, the experiences of great spiritual saints, who have seen Śrī Rādhā with their own eyes and received Her grace, are the direct evidence in point and cannot be refuted. But anybody is at liberty to deny the truth of such testimony if he so wills. I can neither press it upon him, nor persuade him to accept it. But whether one accepts it or not, truth cannot perish. We need not discuss the point whether Śrī Rādhā was

married to Śrī Kṛṣṇa or not, although the ancient works are full of evidence supporting the fact of marriage. For if you look at Śrī Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary mortal and judge His deeds at Brindaban from that standpoint, let me point out to you that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was only eleven years of age when he left Brindaban for Mathura. The Rāsa-dance and other Līlās took place before this event. No erotic sentiment is possible at that age. If, on the other hand, you look upon Him as the Omnipotent, the indwelling Controller, the One Self of all, the Lord of worlds, the Embodiment of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, the Divine Himself, then Śrī Rādhā, whatever Her outward role, is the Divine Mother Herself, the Bliss-Power of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the very manifestation of His Bliss aspect. She is thus eternally inseparable from Him. In the Divine Līlā of Ānanda or Bliss, God's presence is realized in two aspects. Śrī Rādhā represents His Mahābhāva aspect, the aspect of the Highest unadulterated Bliss, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa represents Highest Love. The nature of Love is to be happy with the happiness of the beloved. Where a desire for sense-pleasure dwells, Love does not abide. Desire or Kāma proceeds from error or ignorance. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the beloved of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Rādhā, the Beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All that Śrī Rādhā does, does for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and as Her nature is to be happy with the happiness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Her joy is boundless when She sees Śrī Kṛṣṇa happy. Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's joy increases with the joy of Śrī Radha, for She is His beloved, and all Love-play of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is carried on with a view to please Her. Thus both work

for each other's joy and are eternally occupied in the Līlā. The Gopīs are the several direct manifestations of Śrī Rādhā, the Bliss-Power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They derive their joy from the joyful union of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa and play their role in the eternal Līlā. The Līlā is of the highest divine order in which both Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are Lovers as well as the Beloved. The poet Śrī Bhāgavatrasika thus sings:

Both are Chakoras and both the Moon.
 Both Chātakas, both Swāti; both
 clouds and lightning both.
 Both lotuses, both bees around; both
 iron and magnet both.
 Both lovers, both beloved; both
 formed a pair of camelopardals in
 mutual love.
 Both clouds, peacocks both; both deer
 both love-saturated.
 Both serpent-gems and serpents both;
 both water and both fish swimming
 in each other.
 In sport are they the sportive beloved
 and the sportive lover.
 Both live to gaze at each other's face,
 drink nectar one from other's lips and
 are never separated.

The same poet, then, reminds us that these transcendent experiences of Love are not intelligible except to those who themselves have had a taste of Divine Love.

It is, indeed, true that the Rāsa-dance and other Līlas of the Lord have been described in erotic terms and the characters of the Play have been put forward as the hero and heroines of an ordinary love-drama. But to say that the perusal of this Līlā awakens erotic feelings is absurd. For the reading of the five chapters of the Rāsa-Līlā has been recognized as the best and most

effective means of dispelling all erotic desire. As a matter of fact, it roots out all erotic desire. But those who have no faith in God and have not developed any affection for God, stand on a different footing. They should never read the Rāsa-Līlā. It is a question of one's spiritual capacity, which is always determined by one's state of mind. In my view, there is nothing condemnable in this Play of transcendent Love between the Hero, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and His beloved Gopīs.

The hero in this Play is He, who is the integral Brahma, the Highest Purusa, the Lord of all worlds, the Self and Master of all beings, the One absolute Support of all Cosmic existence, who holds the whole universe only in a part of His being and is the very embodiment of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. And the heroines are the Gopīs, the direct manifestations of the Bliss-Power of the Lord and are essentially inseparable from Him. The Līlā itself is full of that Conscious Blissful Presence, wonderful beyond all measure, unapproachable by the mind, super-normal and supremely divine. But even if we admit for a moment that all the meeting and dallying as represented in the Līlā was out and out erotic in its taste and appearance, it makes no essential difference. If you crystallize a quantity of refined sugar into the shape of a bitter gourd, will that make the sugar bitter and lose its natural sweetness? Quite the contrary: it will become an object of pleasant surprise. In appearance, though a bitter gourd, it will be found to be the sweet sugar without any bitterness of the gourd. Similarly, the Līlā between Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa,

the embodiment of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss and the Gopīs, who represent the intensest formations of His Bliss-Power, contains nothing of the bitterness of eroticism though the language used to express it may appear to be erotic. It represents an eternal flow of the divine waters of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. All erotic sentiment is derived from the activity of lower Māyā, the impure illusory power, and any such sentiment is wholly inconceivable in a plane where the lower Māyā itself is non-existent. The erotic sentiment is utterly destroyed in a plane far below the plane of this Līlā. No man can, however, imitate this Līlā, and he who proceeds to imitate it, indulges in sin. God is inimitable. No object of Māyā can represent what is beyond Māyā, or play its role. We can make sweets of a gourd and they may all look sweet, but they will nevertheless retain the bitterness of the material. Therefore those who wished or wish to have a taste of the relations of the lover and the beloved in imitation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Rāsa-Līlā have ruined or are ruining themselves. It is only Śrī Kṛṣṇa who can imitate Śrī Kṛṣṇa in all His ways.

This brings us to your question, "How can, then, the Divine be regarded as Ideal for mankind to follow?" which deserves consideration. My first answer to the question is that deeds of childhood are never taken to serve as examples for others. Lives of the greatest saints all over the world do not show that their childhood represented the ideal, which they put before the world in their after life. The Līlā of Vraja came to its end even before Śrī Kṛṣṇa attained the eleventh year of age. My second answer

is that of all the Līlās of Vraja, the Gopī-Līlā is the most secret and esoteric. Only the Lord and His most intimate associates can enter it. It is not a Līlā of this mundane existence, nor is it intended to set an example for the guidance of men in their ordinary life. It is a Divine Līlā of which only Mahātmās, who rise very high in their spiritual ascent, become aware in their own region of self-experience. It has nothing to do with the guidance of peoples. This esoteric Līlā was not a thing of general knowledge even to the people of Vraja. Not to mention others, even the Gopas found their Gopī-wives sleeping beside them on the night of the Rāsa-dance.

Brahmā and other gods waited outside and could not see what was going on inside the bower. They looked wondrously at the mere external show with their gaze fixed on it like that of sight-seers who see things from outside and are captivated by the outer splendour. Lord Śankara, the divine sage Nārada, and, at a certain period, Śrī Arjuna were privileged to view the Līlā, but only after they had entered into the consciousness of the Gopī. Śiśupāla had no knowledge of this Līlā, for we see in the *Mahābhārata* that he did not utter a word about it, while pouring his bitterest words of abuse on Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Only if he had known it, he would not have spared Śrī Kṛṣṇa from the charge of dallying with others' wives. This, however, does not mean that the Līlā was not a fact, and is but an interpretation subsequently added to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's life. For, we find in the *Mahābhārata*, the evidence of Draupadī crying out for

divine help and calling Śrī Kṛṣṇa as 'Gopijanapriya', the Beloved of the Gopīs. Draupadī was an intimate devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and knew the secret. This Līlā has nothing to do with the setting of an ideal for the right conduct of men in their life of the world. It is, therefore, altogether irrelevant to suggest that the Līlā stands opposed to the ideal for right guidance of the people. Guidance of the people is a matter which concerns the people of the world. But for those who are Sādhakas seeking to enter the spiritual world, the Līlā itself is the ideal to sustain and guide them. It is, no doubt, related in the *Bhāgavata* and is, indeed, true that the Gopīs were very powerfully affected by Kāma (Ananga) when they heard the notes of the flute. But it has already been pointed out that the Kāma of the Gopīs was not that degraded thing which ordinarily goes by the name of love in the world. Love also is Ananga, i. e., featureless. The Kāma of Gopīs was their love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa which burst forth from their hearts the moment their ears caught the notes of His flute and so overpowered them that they ran heedlessly in search of Him. He stood there on the bank of the Jamuna only to receive their love-offerings. He summoned them to Him by the notes of the flute. It was a Līlā of Love between loving devotees on the one hand, and their Beloved Lord on the other. Here there is nothing of Kāma, the degraded form of earthly love.

Now let us come to the poets who have described these Līlās. These fall under three heads: (1) Poets of Divine Love who had a direct vision of these Līlās, (2) Poets who believed in the

validity of the accounts of the Līlās and relying on them composed their works with faith and devotion, and (3) Poets of erotic emotion who compose their poetry with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rādhā and the Gopīs for their hero and heroines and describe erotic emotion in a pure or in an impure manner. I cannot name all the poets of the three classes and place each in his proper place. For who knows the exact motive behind all of them and their compositions? My reverence, however, goes to Śrī Sūradās, Śrī Tulasīdās, Śrī Nandadās and other poets of Divine Love and I believe that all that they have written have the sanction of the scriptures behind them. Śrī Tulasīdās was a devotee of Śrī Rāma and was not required as such to describe Śrī Kṛṣṇa's life, and yet he has described in most beautiful songs the plays of childhood of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in his *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Gītāvalī*.

Now comes your last question which is, indeed, very awkward for me to reply. But as you have asked me on oath to state the truth, I must say that all that I have written above is not only hearsay or read in books, but there is something besides which I cannot, for myself, disbelieve. I cannot state what that something is, nor do I insist that you should believe all that I have written. God dwells in all forms, and whatever form of His you like best, or consider to be the purest and the most glorious, is the One you should adore. I shall only request you not to indulge in unworthy attacks upon His other forms. And if you are ever called upon to criticize, you may criticize by all means but always within the limits of fairness and

decency. Not only the various sects of Hindus, but even Christians, Mohammedans, Parsis and other religious denominations and spiritual cults all over the world worship the same God whom we worship and know as our God. In other words, it is our God, whom they worship in many different forms. Therefore, let us not abuse any form of God.

* * * * *

The letter has rather exceeded its limits. As to what the truth is, I do not know in its entirety. What little I know is not always present to the mind and what comes to the mind is not easy to put into writing for want of the proper word, thought, time and other reasons. I hope, you will kindly excuse me.

Hints for Practicants in Devotion

BY V. JAGANNATHAM, B.A.

*Tenfold conduct
impending
cultivation of
devotion*

It is needless for me to stress once again upon the imperative necessity in the case of a neophyte in devotion for cultivating the same in its fivefold aspect as expounded in my previous two articles. Despite the circumspection favouring the due performance by the Sādhaka of the mandatory and Śastra-ordained duties connected with the sphere of devotion, he may, in the course of his transcendental endeavours, encounter some transverse currents of the shape of offensive or prohibitory conduct which detract much from the merit of such duties and hamper the progress of devotion. It is, therefore, the paramount duty of the beginner to take due note of such conduct and eschew the same at all costs with proper discernment and meticulous care. I append below the several denominations of the aforesaid conduct:—

- (1) Association with non-devotees.
- (2) Obliging nature.
- (3) Enterprising spirit.

- (4) Study of too many books and love for polemics and vain logic.
- (5) Parsimonious nature.
- (6) Slavish submission to passions and weaknesses.
- (7) Reviling other gods and gods of others.
- (8) Causing injury to beings in creation.
- (9) Offences relating to Śrīmūrti-worship and offences against the Divine Name.
- (10) Blasphemous conduct towards God and His devotees.

Non-devotees referred to in the first item are, again, of six classes as under:—

- (a) Non-theistic non-moralists.
- (b) Non-theistic moralists.
- (c) Theistic moralists who relegate God to a subordinate position in their ethical code.
- (d) Hypocrites and dissemblers in devotion.

(e) Impersonalists.

(f) Polytheists.

(a) Men of demoniac or non-divine

*Non-moralists
and Non-theists* propensity who rule out both morality and theism from their code of conduct come under this category. These unbelieving non-moralists naturally lead an unbridled life. To them this universe is unreal, without prop and without Lord. It is verily the product of the mutual congress of the opposite sexes with lust as its root cause. Self-adulated and inflated with passion and pride as they are, these soulless verities seek the gratification of their libidinous senses which is to them the very acme of human ambitions, and they resort even to the extreme type of monstrosity in depriving others of their wealth and comforts for the sake of their lust and greed. They are thus a source of terror to the whole universe and they undermine the same in their endeavours to compel the services of every living creature in it to minister to their material comforts and aggrandisement.

(b) Some there are who welcome an ethical or moral life, but give no place in it for God or theism. They sincerely believe that an unmixed moral life helps the development in man of perfect ideals relating to justice, conscience, truth, charity, self-denial and a host of other items of conduct which go to make up the ethical code. But they little realize that a code of morals which eschews theistic thought is of no value as it cannot help a man to gauge his true position in the world or to have a correct grasp of the standard of human values by reason of his non-theistic attitude.

The conduct of non-theistic moralists is evidently unreliable as they are sure to let down their much-vaunted moral principles the moment they happen to clash with their self-interest.

(c) Next we come to theistic moralists

who are again of two classes.

*Two-fold class
of Theistic
moralists*

Those who acquiesce in the indispensability of faith in an Overlord of creation to help in the regulation of their moral conduct, but deny a permanent place to Him in their science of morals, belong to the former class. To them the Overlord is merely a special Puruṣa, a person untouched, of course, by misery, actions, their results and desires. The latter class invoke the aid of a Supreme Ruler for ensuring a well-regulated and unerring moral conduct, and when the same is achieved as a result of homage rendered to Him, His services are no longer favoured as in their opinion no further advantage is seen to accrue by continuing their homage to Him when once their mind-stuff, Chitta, has become thoroughly cleansed by reason of their well-regulated moral life. As purity of mind is believed to lead eventually to the knowledge of self, which, according to them is the *summum bonum* of human existence, their relations with the Supreme Ruler of the Universe are only of a temporal nature; they are in no way eternal. So the devotion practised by these two classes is of ephemeral value and is naturally superficial and skin-deep.

(d) I have by now dealt with three classes of persons who are reckoned among non-devotees by reason of their devotion being nil or nominal. Next come hypocrites and dissem-

*Hypocrites
and
Dissemblers*

blers in devotion. These do not possess any real devotion although they wear its signs over their person. In the words of the Bible, a hypocrite is not only self-condemned in respect of God's service, but a menace to the society of saints. Outwardly, he wears the fashion of prayer, but he hides the devil in his heart. As such, he is a lost soul. Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? He does not remember that God is a searcher of hearts, of Jerusalem with candles, and the punisher of men that are settled on their lees, that say in their heart "the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil." When such double-dealers succeed in founding a sect in the name of devotion, the ignorant and credulous are undoubtedly lured into their parlour by their outward signs, and they eventually spoil themselves by adopting all the ways of their preceptors who are adepts in opportune talk, show of extreme dispassion for the world, and continuous lip-chanting of the Divine Name to fit in with their outer accoutrements despite the nestling in their hearts of heinous unpardonable sins of the shape of addiction to worldly lusts, riches and vanity. "Men with double heart seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord and their works are in the dark; and they say, who seeth us? and who knoweth us? But can any hide himself in secret places that God shall not see him?"

(e) Next come Impersonalists.
Impersonalists These pay lip-homage to devotion which in their opinion merely helps in the attainment of purity of the mind-stuff which in turn helps in the

comprehension of the Absolute Truth. When the Finite Self known as Jiva in common parlance merges in the Plenary Self, which is its fountain-source, there ensues an undifferentiated and absolute soul-state, which, according to them is the goal of spiritual endeavours of a human being. Devotion and Personal God occupy but minor places in their scheme of self-realization, and as such a devotee to whom service to the Godhead is both a means and end in the attainment of the soul's religion has nothing in common with Impersonalists and is in no way benefited by their company.

(f) The last mentioned are Polytheists or worshippers of many gods. For obvious reasons their devotion is anything but steadfast and they have no faith in absolute and unqualified service to the one Lord of the Universe as the highest end of human existence. They little remember the truism of *Srimad Bhāgavata* that "The worship of Achyuta, the Lord of Steadfastness, is the worship of all."

The neophyte in devotion has nothing to do with the supra-mentioned six classes of non-devotees, and he should under no circumstances keep company with them. Heart-to-heart exchange of spiritual ideals and feeling brotherhood like unto the membership of an "inner circle" constitute what is meant by the words "keeping company," association or Sanga, and this is altogether prohibited in the case of non-devotees. Sitting side-by-side with non-devotees in an assembly; crossing a river along with them in a boat; performing ablutions in their

What association means

company in a bathing-ghat; and vending or purchasing articles along with them in a market or emporium do not amount to association in the light of what was stated *supra*, and no harm ensues to the practicant by such mechanical dealings.

(2) Obliging or compliant nature is an item of interdictory *obliging nature* conduct which a practicant should beware and is of four kinds when evinced in the selection of (a) disciples (b) associates (c) servants and (d) new alliances.

(a) Disciples

Admitting ineligibles into the religious order as disciples just for filthy lucre is a serious misconduct relating to the devotional line and brings the order itself into disrepute. There should therefore be no hankering after disciples, and none should be admitted into the fold unless a most deserving person is found for discipleship.

(b) Associates

Many an evil will accrue to the noviciate if he begins to move on intimate terms with persons who are averse to devotion. He should therefore not place himself under obligation to accept anyone for companionship, especially one belonging to the coterie of non-devotees.

(c) Servants

Practicants should not entertain servants who have no love for God, and who are not brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord as the Bible would put it. Much trouble will ensue if no discrimination is made in the employment of servants as it would often happen that the right ones are missed either by sufferance or indulgence shown

towards world-minded persons. The Bible says that servants are to be obedient to them that are their masters according to the flesh with singleness of heart, not with eye-service as man-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart; with goodwill doing service as to the Lord and not to men.

(d) New alliances

New alliances are to be invariably entered into only with tried devotees of sterling worth after very careful selection. The practicant should note that indiscriminate alliances will greatly jeopardize the progress of his devotion and land him frequently in awkward predicaments.

(3) Enterprising spirit as noticed in *Love for enterprise* the neophyte is a stumbling-block in the path of devotion.

Servants of God should not, as a rule, undertake great works and things too high for them though connected with religion and its propaganda, such as construction of temples, monasteries, prayer-halls, convents and other and similar houses of God as they severely interfere with their devotional practices and make their life quite diffusive and restless. A devotee should not, in the words of David of the Bible, exercise himself in great matters or in things too high for him. This should be especially so in three particular situations of life as stated *infra*. Large-scale undertakings should be altogether eschewed, firstly, when funds for the same are not available with the promoters thereof; secondly, when senility and imbecility are making great inroads into the physical and mental constitution of a human being portending fast approach of death; and thirdly, when the work undertaken is of such

stupendous and complicated nature as would defy accomplishment unless it be by the concerted action and continuous patronage of a legion of wealthy donors, and voluntary contributions of cash, material, labour and what not when they are not easily forthcoming.

(4) Devotees should confine their studies to books dealing with the science of devotion and of knowledge and works that have a real and direct bearing on devotion. Harm ensues in the shape of love for polemics if they resort to desultory study of the said science and skip from subject to subject pleading want of time. It is half-knowledge that generally fosters the tendency for vain logic. They should not rush to hasty conclusions or offer uncalled-for criticism in respect of any religious lecture or any academical discussion which they may happen to attend for the simple reason that the handling of the subjects dealt with is not agreeable to their taste. They should not also resort to too much reading as it distracts their devotion and increases worldly wisdom and love for argumentation or controversy. The Bible says that "in much wisdom is much grief and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."

(5) Parsimonious nature in devotees is a highly demoralizing factor and is of three kinds as relating to (a) personal conduct (b) financial dealings and (c) physical endeavours.

Penury should be avoided at all costs. One should be liberal and accom-

Book reading mania

Penurious nature

modating towards his brother who is the son of God like himself and do all things with fear of God and love and fellow-feeling towards all men. Brotherly love should continue. "Hospitality should be shown one to another and to strangers without grudging; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Brother-devotees should always receive hearty welcome and be treated with unfeigned affection. Members of other religious orders should be shown all possible respect and well attended to. Dependents should be well cared for. The poor should be fed and helped in all possible ways. The Bible says, "Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth. For he that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord and that which he hath given will He pay him again." Proper price should be paid for things brought of others. Rulers should be helped in their administration by the payment of all just taxes, by "rendering unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's." The sick should be nursed and the naked and destitute should be clothed. One should not grudge taking a little personal trouble if by his mere physical exertion he could relieve the suffering of a deserving person in distress. It is more blessed to give than to receive. So one should perform charity, which, in the words of the Bible, edifieth and covers a multitude of sins. If one has nothing to give, he should try to please others even by his graceful and heartening speech and sweet and sincere words.

Submission to human weaknesses

(6) Slavish submission to passions and weaknesses is an unpardonable crime. It is of four kinds as submission to (a) passions (b) habits (c) intoxicants and (d) bigotry.

(a) Passions

The fallen soul has many an occasion in his mundane career to be subjected to grief, lust, anger, greed, egoism, pride, jealousy, fear of want and a host of other human weaknesses which nail him all the more deep on the wheel of metempsychosis. The practicant in devotion should take due note of this and see that he is not victimized by anyone of them. When once these weaknesses get the upper hand of man who happens also to be a Sādhaka in the devotional line, they effectively bar the progress of devotion and the victim is held up to ridicule by others and gets highly debased in the eyes of the world.

(b) Habits

Sleeping in the day time; lying in bed even after sunrise; chewing Pānsupāri; taking food and drink and performing ablutions at untimely hours; lounging in featherbeds amidst silk cushions; and tasting rich dishes and delicacies are reckoned among undesirable habits which are as poison to devotion. The practicant should save himself from such habits and practise strict moderation. As the Bible would put it, our true meat is God. We shall not hunger if we approach Him and not thirst if we believe in Him. We must therefore be very simple and moderate and an ideal of emulation to the world in the service of the Lord. "Let your

moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand"—is what the Apostle directs us to note.

(c) Intoxicants

Addiction to drugs and intoxicants brings on many an evil in its trail. Drugs were never known to be helpful to devotion, especially of the unalloyed type. Even with a pair of tongs, a devotee should not touch intoxicants such as wines, liquor, opium and its pillules, the dried leaves of the hemp plant, *cannabis sativa*, popularly known as Gāñjā or Bhāng, and even the too-familiar tobacco with great notoriety for universal consumption. As stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*, no rule enjoins the creatures of this world to run after the pleasures of liquor. To wean them away from this tendency is, on the other hand, the intention of the Vedic lore.

(d) Bigotry

Servile submission to bigotry is highly catastrophical to devotion and spells disaster to the whole line. Bigotry invariably brings on prejudice. Prejudice is the altar at which are sacrificed both truth and justice. So a bigoted person is never amenable to reason and is always perverse to the extreme. Let me cite an instance of bigotry. Wearing signs of devotion was already stated by me in the former of my first-mentioned articles as an item of cultivation of devotion with body. If this item alone were to be considered as the alpha and omega of devotion, bigotry can go no further. The wearer of signs, though deplete of devotion, flatters himself into thinking that he is a superclass devotee and albeit he is the possessor of the mere unessentials of

devotion, derides and looks down upon real devotees and Sadhus when he does not find similar signs on their bodies. Consequently he is for ever deprived of the company of Sadhus which is so very essential for the progress of devotion; for he scrupulously avoids everyone of them who is a non-wearer of signs. So there is no redemption at all for him; for he, by reason of his self-deluding bigotry, is to continue for ever in the calamitous state of a bankrupt in devotion.

(7) Showing disrespect towards other gods and gods of others is a positively heinous offence.

Disrespect towards gods

Although God is secondless and Adhokṣaja reserving to Himself the right to be not exposed to the mundane senses of a Jiva, we hear of a plurality of gods with delegated powers who are deputed by Him for the rulership and governance of the several worlds comprising this vast macrocosm, the product of the Demiurge of creation. Though all of them are mere Jivas, they are always classed among gods, and are worshipped and approached by men of kindred character for the sake of wealth, power or progeny. So a practicant in devotion should neither deprecate nor vilify them; but on the other hand try to seek their blessings and a boon from them of the shape of unremitting devotion towards the secondless God. He should also evince due respect towards the symbolism adopted in other countries and by other nationalities in respect of God-worship and neither their methods nor forms of worship should ever be called in question. He should always remember that it is through these symbols alone that the neophyte receives

preliminary training in the path of devotion. Criticising temper results always from self-conceit; self-conceit naturally destroys humility in man; and when humility is gone, there is no place for devotion in man's heart.

(8) Causing injury to others is a highly blamable offence.

Hurting others

Killing God's creatures even for the sake of food certainly comes under this category. Producing agitation in the minds of others by the use of harsh and opprobrious language resulting from truculent temper; calumniating others; throwing invectives at others for no reason; resorting to perjury and perfidious actions; wrecking the comforts of others to gain one's own selfish ends, are a few out of a multitude of sins of the shape of causing injury to others. Practicants in devotion should be very vigilant in this matter and desist from such sinful acts. They should always remember that the meaning of hurt or injury is not confined to the physical action alone and that the offence is aggravated when it extends to regions beyond physical. When we lust after or bear ill-will towards another we think we have not hurt the person. But Jesus tells us in very plain terms in the Bible that we have hurt that person in heart if not by hand. All the attempts to appease God for the offence of hurting others are in vain while the victim is left to smart under the insult to which he was subject. Jesus says, "First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thy adversary quickly whiles thou art in the way with him."

Adultery is hurt

Committing adultery which in the view of Jesus is no less than a hurt, is, He says, not confined to the physical aspect alone. Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. This hurt is evidently more subtle and forceful. So the servant of God should beware of this and similar acts to save himself from perdition.

Lovingkindness and its denominations

In this connection, I beg leave to impress upon the kind reader one special feature of devotion. A devotee naturally shows lovingkindness towards all creatures in creation. Love and kindness are in no way distinct from devotion. That disposition which receives the dual name of love and devotion in relation to the Overlord of creation is nothing but lovingkindness which receives again the triple appellation of friendship, compassion and indifference when bestowed upon other living beings in the world. This lovingkindness is the constitutional Dharma of a Jiva. The inherent disposition of the Jiva-soul in its transcendental state which is designated love and the threefold disposition of the conditioned soul known under the names of friendship, compassion and indifference are simply the different forms of lovingkindness which is Jiva's constitutional Dharma as stated *supra*.

In the case of the Jiva passing through the circuit of mundane existence, this lovingkindness is noticed in its utterly unblossomed aspect in the shape of egoism or self-centred state confined to the well-being of one's own physical body; in its slightly blossomed state it

takes the form of altruism confined, of course, to the well-being of one's own household; in its further blossomed state, it is of the form of what is known as communalism or love for all men belonging to one's own caste-division; in its still further blossomed state, the circle is sufficiently widened and it appears in the shape of nationalism or love for one's own race; in its considerably blossomed state, it is of the form of patriotism or love for one's own countrymen; in its almost blossomed state, it is of the nature of philanthropism or love for the whole of mankind; and finally in its full-blown state, it takes its natural shape of what we know as universalism or overflowing love for all beings, whether moving or motionless, wheresoever existing in creation. It is this last mentioned state that should serve as the devotee's ideal of life. As such, lovingkindness which precludes even the thoughts of doing harm to others, and which is of the mellow form of merciful attitude towards all beings in creation, is the only quality which needs be cultivated by all neophytes in devotion.

(9) Offences committed during Śrīmūrti-worship and offences against the Divine Name

Offences relating to Śrīmūrti-worship

are too numerous to mention; they are described in great detail in the several sacred works on devotion. The practicants will do well to avoid these offences with punctilious care as their commission completely checkmates all progress in devotion. I can mention only a few offences relating to Śrīmūrti-worship as it is impossible to deal with all of them in the course of a small article. Some devotional works

have arranged these offences into five classes as under:—

Offences arising from

- (a) indifference,
- (b) disrespect,
- (c) slovenliness,
- (d) indiscipline, and
- (e) vanity.

(a) Indifference

Non-performance of seasonal and periodical festivals relating to Śrimūrti-worship though plenty of funds are available and forthcoming; conducting worship with unessential and secondary offerings although the usual and prescribed things could be easily secured; absence of even the least effort to procure fruits and flowers of the season to be offered to the Godhead; non-offering of adoration, obeisance and prostration before the shrine of God; entering into a temple without offering a light to the deity—these and others are offences arising from indifference.

(b) Disrespect

Entering the temple-precincts with sandals or in a conveyance; failure to offer reverential salutation to the deity; offering one-handed salutation; pointing at Śrimūrti with a finger; performing circumambulation in front of the deity; seating oneself facing God with legs outstretched in the direction of the deity or with one's back turned towards the shrine; singing hymns and panegyrics with legs drawn up and knees pressed towards the belly interlocked in arms; sleeping and eating facing the shrine of God; talking aloud; starting conversation with others; merry-making with lady visitors; sobbing in God's presence

recalling to mind some domestic mishap; quarrelling with visitors and temple-goers; discussing worldly topics; lending deaf ear to the stories of God read in temples and diverting the attention of others who are hearing them; fouling the temple atmosphere; distributing unoffered articles to others and offering only the balance to the deity; praising others in the presence of Śrimūrti; prohibiting religious discourses, music, dance and the like in the temple and forcible obstruction of such performances under cover of authority; bathing for fear of pollution at the touch of penitent outcastes and sinners visiting the temple with great piety to serve God; occupying a raised seat in the temple; leaving God's sanctum after worship with back turned towards the deity; smelling flowers and fruit brought as an offering to the temple; visiting Śrimūrti out of temple hours; these and many others are offences arising from disrespect.

(c) Slovenliness

Approaching the shrine of God with defiled mouth or hands or with other bodily impurities; rubbing the leavings of the consecrated food on the walls or pillars of the temple; worshipping the deity clothing oneself in woolens or hairy apparel; spitting on the floor while worshipping the deity; absent-mindedness during Śrimūrti-worship; visiting temple while under the influence of liquor or Gānja or chewing betel-leaves or smoking cigars—these and several others are offences arising from slovenliness.

(d) Indiscipline

Sipping water intended for God's service; taking food and drink not offered

to God; removing lights offered to God to places outside the temple, and either extinguishing them or using them for household purposes; want of regularity in paying visits or rendering service to the deity; failure to offer seasonal fruits or other articles which one is fond of above everything; remissness in the matter of keeping a fast and vigil on Ekādaśi day—these and some others are offences arising from indisipline.

(e) Vanity

One should always consider himself as an humble servant of God and more so during the time of Śrīmūrti-worship. But if one begins to entertain an overweening opinion of one's own qualities and merits as a devotee, and arrogates to himself the credit for worship of a kind far superior to that of others, this presumptuousness goes by the name of vanity. One should not make a parade of one's own opulence in the worship of Śrīmūrti by the multiplication of offerings and presenting the same to the deity on a lavish scale with all possible pomp and splendour. For, this again is vanity, and perhaps also of a most unpardonable type. God is never pleased with pretentious display and paraphernalia. "Let not arrogance come out of your mouth" says the Bible, "for the Lord is a God of knowledge and by him actions are weighed."

So these five cases of offences should be eschewed by all means as they hopelessly cripple the priceless devotional tendency inherent in man. These offences are not confined to the temple-goers alone; they equally affect both the founders and priests of the temple.

Next come offences against the Divine Name. The principal offences are only ten in number. I have dealt with them in some detail in my article entitled "The Science of the Divine Name" published in four parts in the closing issues of this journal for the year 1939. The kind reader is invited to peruse them as detailed in pages 747 to 750 thereof to save unnecessary repetition in this article.

(10) Blasphemy against God and His devotees

*Blasphemy
against God
and devotees*

is an unpardonable sin as whatever is done to the devotee is directly claimed and accepted by the Lord Himself. The practicant in devotion should not allow blasphemous talks on God or His devotees to prevail anywhere and should try to controvert them whenever or wherever they exist provided he finds himself competent to do so. If he happens to hear such profane babblings in any religious assembly or congregation, he should lend a deaf ear to them when by reason of the prepossessed nature of the conveners or the audience, it is patent to him that no useful purpose would be served by refuting their impious arguments. He will also do well to walk out of such assemblies forthwith in expiation of his indiscretion in mixing with all and sundry without discrimination.

As stated in the Bible, devotees live in God as branches of the True Vine, and it is clear that whatever is done to the branches affects the Tree itself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren ye have done it unto Me" is what the Lord says

in eternal fairness to His devotees. The sin and blasphemy against ordinary men is forgiven inasmuch as they pose that they can defend and assert themselves against them independent of God's intervention; but when man blasphemous God and His beloved, "it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world nor in the world to come."

I have finished my delineation of the tenfold nature of prohibitory conduct which is admitted on all hands as inimical to devotion. My labour will be deemed to have been recompensed a hundredfold if the same could be found helpful to any single novice in devotion who is earnest about its cultivation in the fivefold aspect as set forth at the beginning of this article.

Five Specifics for Self-Purification

Second Series

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

The first series of "Five Specifics for Self-Purification" dealing with Patience, Service for Fellow-beings, Honouring others, Self-sacrifice and Equanimity appeared in some issues of this Magazine last year. With this issue of the *Kalpataru*, we commence the publication of the second series which deal with another infallible prescription. The five ingredients of this prescription similarly begin with five Sakaras (words beginning with dental *s*), namely, Satsanga (Good Association), Sadāchāra (Right Conduct), Santoṣa (Contentment), Saralatā (Straightforwardness) and Satya (Truth). In the present issue we take up for discussion the first item of the series, i. e., Satsanga.

SATSANGA OR GOOD ASSOCIATION

ब्रह्मण्यपस्तिलान् भूमि गन्धो वासयते यथा ।
पुष्पाणामधिकासेन तथा संसर्गजा गुणाः ॥
मोहजालस्य योनिर्हि मूर्द्धेरेव समागमः ।
अहन्यवनि धर्मस्य योनिः साधुसमागमः ॥
तस्मात्प्रादैश्च वृद्धैश्च सुखभावैस्तपतिष्ठिः ।
सदिक्ष्य सह संसर्गः कार्यः शमपरायणैः ॥

(*Mahābhārata*)

"As the scent, by virtue of its association with flowers, imparts its odour to clothes, water, linseed and earth, even so virtues derived from association produce their effect. Association with fools attached to worldly objects is productive of a web of ignorance, while daily association with saints and great souls leads to Dharma, or righteousness. One should, therefore, always cultivate association with saints and men of wisdom, experienced elders, good-natured ascetics and those great souls whose very presence casts an atmosphere of transcendent peace."

KUSANGA OR BAD ASSOCIATION

Of all causes leading to the spiritual rise or fall of a man, one of the foremost is association. His mind is what his association makes it, and according to his mind he acts and reaps what his actions yield. Even a man of good heart becomes evil-minded through the influence of evil association and meets his fall, while an evil-doer gets freed from evil and becomes a great soul through the influence of good association. But it

must be remembered that in the case of an ordinary man, good association does not produce its effect as swiftly, and in the same measure, as produced by bad association. For human nature, like water, quite naturally follows a downward course. And when this process is aided by evil association, the fall becomes swift and precipitous like the fall of a man who happens to slip from a height and is, again, pushed down by somebody to abysmal depth. Attachment to worldly objects, evil impressions of many previous lives stored in the mind, unhealthy atmosphere and similar other causes hinder the soul in its upward march. That is why in the case of the average man good association produces its effect so slowly and in such a small measure. Fall occurs owing to weakness, owing to darkness, even without any attempt, but rising requires strength, light and effort. Fall is destruction, rise construction. Everybody knows how easy it is to destroy and how difficult to build. The process of destruction makes great strides when it receives even the slightest help, whereas construction requires a mighty and enduring effort. We have, therefore, to conclude that bad association produces a swift effect on the average man, while good association produces its effect slowly. Thus one should make it a point entirely to give up evil association.

By evil association is meant not only association with men of evil actions and evil thoughts, but all that gives a wrong trend to the mind and senses, all that creates an evil impulse and evil thought and a strong attachment to sense-objects and thereby impedes one's

progress in the path of the Lord. Place of residence, food, water, family circle, social atmosphere, object of sight, literature, criticism, occupation and method of worship, these ten, when good, tend to uplift and ennable the mind of man, and when evil make him evil-minded and precipitate his fall. One must, therefore, be exceedingly careful that he does not see any object, animate or inanimate, nor hear any word, nor discuss anything, nor live in an atmosphere, nor eat any food, nor read any literature, nor adopt any mode of worship as may even remotely tend to bring about his fall. The mind of man readily goes on changing from bad to worse as the influence of evil association grows on him. Under such influence, even the mind of a man of the Sattvic nature would give itself up to the Rajasic impulse and lose its power of discerning the right from the wrong. And a Rajasic mind held under the influence of evil association is sure to see things in a perverted form.* The very thing which he previously abhorred would now appear to him as something desirable. Consequently losing all sense of the downward course he is pursuing and mistaking the gradual fall for real progress, he would proceed with rapid strides towards his spiritual doom.

* यथा धर्मसम्बन्धं च कार्यं चाकार्यसम्बन्धं च ।
अवश्यावत्प्रजानाति वृद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥
अधर्मं धर्मसिति या मन्यते तमसाषुष्टा ।
सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च वृद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥
(Gita xviii. 31-32)

"The reason by which distinction between right and wrong, between what should be done or should not be done, is wrongly made, is Rajasic reason.

Although the influence of the surrounding atmosphere and food and drink is by no means insignificant, that of human association is all the greater. That is why the association of noble and saintly persons is generally called Satsanga, or good association and that of evil persons Kusanga, or evil association.

EFFECTS OF EVIL ASSOCIATION

1. Liking for criticism of another's drawbacks and the habit of backbiting grow.

2. Attachment to worldly objects and desire for sense-pleasures increase.

3. The strength of the inner enemies—lust, anger, greed, pride, ignorance and jealousy—increases, and they get firmly rooted.

4. Hypocrisy, boastfulness, pride, intolerance, unreasoning, untruthfulness, cowardice, violence and other vices spring up and multiply.

5. Likes and dislikes, desires, impulses and egoism have their sway with the result that the veil of ignorance is still more thickened and made stronger.

6. Vices and sins of various kinds increase and consequently pains and miseries, diseases, epidemics, calumnies, insults, griefs and sorrows, endless series of births and deaths and the agonies of hell have to be endured.

Lord Kapiladeva says in the *Bhagavata* :—

यज्ञसङ्गिः परि युनः जिभोदरकूलोचयेः ।
आस्तितो रमते अनुस्तमो विशति पूर्ववत् ॥

"The reason which clouded by ignorance mistakes wrong for right and sees all things in a perverted form is Tamasic reason."

सत्यं जीवं दया मौनं त्रुटिः श्रीहार्यंशः क्षमा ।
शमो दमो भगवेति यस्तद्वाद् याति संक्षयम् ॥
तेष्वशान्तेषु यूदेषु लक्ष्मितात्मसाध्यु ।
सत्त्वं न कुर्वन्त्वोच्चेषु योवित्कीडामुद्गेषु च ॥

(III. xxxi. 32-34)

"He who associates with men given to sexual and sensual pleasures and follows them in their actions, verily enters with them the same dark hells. For evil association destroys truthfulness, purity, compassion, tranquillity of mind, right reasoning, gracefulness, modesty, fame, forgiveness, control of the mind, control of the senses, mastery over wealth and all other great qualities. One should, therefore, never cultivate the company of men with a dissipated mind,—men who are ignorant, possessed of perverted understanding, puppets in the hands of women, pitiable, vicious and wicked."

Of all associations the association of women is the most dangerous. So it is said:—

न तथाय भवेन्नोहो बन्धशान्यप्रसङ्गतः ।
योविस्ताद यथा पुस्तो यथा तत्सङ्गिसङ्गतः ॥
सत्त्वं न कुर्यात् प्रमदासु जातु
योगस्य पारं परमामृतम् ।

मत्स्येवया प्रतिलभायमलाभो
वदन्ति या निरयादारमस्य ॥

(*Bhagavata* III xxxi. 35, 39)

"One is not so much deluded and degraded by association with others as by association with women and those associated with them. He who has, by My grace (the grace of the Lord), realized his Self and aspires to ascend the highest culmination of Yoga, should never cultivate the company of young women. For they are the gates of hell."

Association with the associates of women has also been declared to be 'the gate of darkness,' 'तमोदारं योविसङ्गिसङ्गम्'. Like-

wise, for women association with young men is harmful. Males and females living together have a tendency to attract each other and the process poisons the mind of both, and hence both suffer a moral fall.

The fact is whatever attracts the mind to earthly enjoyment is an evil association. That is why the scriptures raise their warning even against talks about enjoyment. For these talks generate an absorbing thought about those objects which brings in its train attachment, desire, passion, infatuation, loss of memory, destruction of intelligence, and, lastly, the destruction of soul itself.*

Rightly, therefore, it has been said:—

जनो विषयाणा साक्षं वातीतः पति क्षणात् ।

विषयं प्राहुराचार्योः सितालिपेन्द्रिवारुणीम् ॥

(*Siva-Purāna*)

"By talking to men about worldly attachment, one is pulled down in an instant. Hence spiritual teachers hold these worldly objects to be a wine mixed with sugar-candy."

And with reference to men of vicious character, the Śāstras definitely enjoin that their association must be wholly discarded. Thus:

"By talking to those sinners, by seeing and touching them, by sitting on a single seat with them, by taking food with them and by being in company with them, their sinfulness is acquired."

One should, therefore, carefully avoid all evil associations and take to the association of what is Sat, i.e., what is good and noble. (*To be continued*)

Faith

Come unto me, when the hours are dark
and the Sun of Truth has set,
Come when it is the night for the mind
and the eyes with tears are wet;
Come when doubt reigns, peace flies
and efforts are in vain,
Come when heart is feeble, mind wavers
and confusion in the brain;
Yes come, come in the form of FAITH.
Come when I know not aught,
whether I should think or not,
Come, Oh Lord of Love,
Thou comforter dearly sought;
Come in the hour of need,
come at the hour of night,
Come in Thy majesty and might,
come at my miserable plight;
Yes come, come in the form of FAITH.

I am a reed being shaken by the wind
A straw that is tossed by the gale
Blind in the darkness of the mind
A wretch that is lone, in sorrows vale;
Yes come, come in the form of FAITH.

Oh come, take me, lift me, I swoon, I faint
My strength is all withered and mind deeply rent
With doubt and wavering a death I die
Come, come Oh Lord, when senses too fly;
Yes come, come in the form of FAITH.

In the ocean of mind, on the waves of doubt
I swim, I struggle, now sink, now shout
Help, help Oh Lord and Thy mercy send
A plank I need, a plank as my friend;
Yes come, come in the form of FAITH.

—“NAG”

The Kalyana-Kalpataru



Lord Baladeva

294.05

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ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANAM KALDARSHAKU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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यन्निमितां कर्हपि कर्मपर्वणीं
मायां जनोऽयं गुणसर्गमोहितः
न वेद निस्तारणयोगमञ्जसा
तस्मै नमस्ते विलयोदयात्मने ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata V. xvii. 24*)

Obeisance to You (Śrī Balarāma), the embodiment of both the creation and destruction of the universe, charmed by whose manifestation of Sattva and the other Guṇas, the Jīva fails to recognize Māya, which brings him bondage, and to discover the easy means of freedom from bondage.

Ideal Lessons from Maharaj Yudhisthira's Life

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

With reference to Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra, it will not be unreasonable to say that his life was an ideal life in this world. Just as in the age of Tretā Bhagavān Śrī Rāmacandra, the Divine Himself, the very embodiment of Propriety of Conduct, was the supreme ideal so far as practice of Dharma is concerned, almost to the same extent Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra may be regarded as the ideal person in the age of Dwāpara with reference to conduct and practice of Dharma. Of all the characters described in the *Mahābhārata*, Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra's life, therefore, was the most ideal life, wholly worthy of imitation, so far as conduct and practice of Dharma is concerned. To us, Indians, the life of Yudhiṣṭhīra is an incomparable beacon to show the way to rectitude of conduct. He was indeed a repository of virtue and righteousness. The very atmosphere of the place, where he lived, used to become surcharged with the spirit of virtue and righteousness. He used to treat with compassion and love even those who persecuted him, wherefore people called him Ajātaśatru, a man without any enemy. In the practice of the Dharma of a warrior he was so steady that he would rather yield his life than run away from the field of battle, wherefore he became famous as Yudhiṣṭhīra, firm and immovable in battle. As an example of devotion to Dharma few will be found equal to him in the history of the world. There was hardly anything in him which could not be used as

a source of instruction to us. Except gambling he was subject to no evil habit. And his addiction to this also was quite slight and inconsiderable. If carefully and critically analyzed, even the lives of the greatest of men, who attained fame through the practice of Religion, might reveal some stray aspects which would appear to be unworthy of imitation, but in Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra's case almost everything will be found to be worthy of imitation. He repented all his life for the lie uttered by him, clothed in dubious words, in answer to Achārya Drona's query about Aśwatthāma's death. His conduct at home was so pure and exemplary that his brothers, mother, wife, servants, etc., all remained ever satisfied and delighted with him. Not only so, even the general public of the place where he lived offered him confidence and respect drawn by his beautiful conduct. The Brahmans and saints ever remained enamoured of him due to his humility and sweetness. In short, Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra was one of the greatest men in history famous for his virtues, rightness of conduct, sacrifice, truthfulness, devotion to God, wisdom, bravery, sobriety and forbearance. In the present article we shall attempt to describe briefly a few glorious incidents of his life which will be sources of inspiration to those who seek to tread the path of spiritual life. I believe that immense good may be derived by regulating conduct according to the conduct of Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra after a thorough

understanding and appreciation of his virtues and conduct.

ABSENCE OF HATRED

On one occasion, King Duryodhana together with Karṇa, Śakuni and Duḥśasana and other brothers, followed by a huge and powerful army, came to the Dwaita forest where the Pāṇḍavas had been living in exile, ostensibly with the object of inspecting the royal cows, but really with a view to wound the feelings of the Pāṇḍavas. Duryodhana's object was no doubt very reprehensible. The King of celestials, Indra, came to know this. He at once ordered the Gandharva Chitrasena to go and imprison the evil-minded Duryodhana, and bring the latter to his presence. On receipt of this order, Chitrasena vanquished Duryodhana in battle and made him a prisoner together with all his friends and associates. The old minister of Duryodhana and a handful of soldiers, who had somehow escaped the encirclement of Chitrasena, thereupon took refuge under Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira and describing the whole incident to him besought him to free Duryodhana and the other Kauravas from the control of Chitrasena. How could Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira remain indifferent when he heard this? He at once prepared himself to give protection to Duryodhana. He said: "O Lion among men, Arjuna! O Nakula! O Sahadeva! O Bhīma, the unconquerable hero! arise, arise! Get ready all of you with arms in hand to give protection to these people, who have taken refuge with us, and to all members of our family. Do not tarry a moment more. Look, how the Gandharva is carrying away Duryodhana as a prisoner

of war. Go, release him at once."* Further, he said—"O friends, the foremost of heroes! It is the supreme duty of all Kṣatriya kings to give protection, to the best of their ability and power, to all those who seek their protection. The glory of protecting an enemy is still greater. If I had not got entangled in the performance of the sacrifice in which I am engaged, I would have myself started for Duryodhana's protection. But I am helpless now. Therefore, I say, O heroes, go; quickly advance. O Bhīma, mightiest of the Kurus! If the Gandharva chief cannot be prevailed upon by argument, release brother Duryodhana from his grip by any means, even by the exercise of your unconquerable valour." When Bhīma and the other brothers heard these words from the lips of the righteous King Yudhiṣṭhira, who possessed no enemy, their faces brightened up through delight. Their arms and lower lips moved with a jerk as a mark of determination; and on behalf of them all, the great hero Arjuna said: "O King, just as you please! If the Gandharva chief can be prevailed upon by argument to free Duryodhana, well and good; if not, the earth will drink his blood." Hearing these words of Arjuna, the old minister of Duryodhana, derived mental peace. Then, the four valiant Pāṇḍavas started to free Duryodhana. Arjuna, as directed by righteous Yudhiṣṭhira, tried his best by argument to prevail upon the

* शरणं च प्रपञ्चानां शाणार्थं च कुलस्य च ।
उत्तिष्ठर्वं नरव्याप्राः सज्जीभवत मा चिरम् ॥
अर्जुनश्च यमौ चैव त्वं च वीरापराजितः ।
मोक्षयद्यं नरव्याप्रा हियमाणं सुपोषनम् ॥

Gandharva, but the latter was quite unyielding. Thus, compelled to take up arms, Arjuna vanquished the Gandharva in battle. Thereupon Chitrasena told Arjuna who he was and the reason for his taking Duryodhana and his associates as prisoners. The Pāṇḍavas felt extremely surprised when they heard this story. Taking Chitrasena, Duryodhana and all others with them they came to Yudhiṣṭhira, the righteous King, who even when he heard the real object of Duryodhana's coming to the forest, released the latter with his associate prisoners from the control of Chitrasena and gave him leave to return to his kingdom consoling and cheering him with his affectionate behaviour. Duryodhana returned to his place overwhelmed with a sense of shame. The saints, sages and Brahmins all began to praise Yudhiṣṭhira for his generous conduct.

This is one instance of Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira's ideal life. It is an incomparable illustration of both absence of hatred and devotion to Dharma. His mind was not touched by the slightest shade of anger even when he learnt the evil intentions of the wicked Duryodhana. Not only so, he remained wholly indifferent to Duryodhana's shortcomings. On the contrary, his heart became filled with compassion for the latter. He instantaneously arranged the latter's release from the strong fetters of the Gandharva chief. Not only that, he consoled Duryodhana with words of affection so that the latter might not feel sorry or ashamed. Through this incident Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira gives us a clear and distinct lesson about our duty

not to friends alone, but even to an enemy fallen in distress.

PATIENCE

The fact is well-known in the world that with Karṇa's consent Duryodhana, with Śakuni's help, fraudulently won Draupadī kept as pawn in the game of dice. Then, under Duryodhana's order, Duḥśāsana forcibly brought Draupadī to the open royal court dragging her by the hair. Afraid of violation of her honour, Draupadī appeared raising a piteous cry; the whole court was moved by her wail and at the sight of her terrible distress. But except Vidura and Vikarṇa, none had the courage for fear of Duryodhana to protest against this atrocious crime. Draupadī was in her monthly course at the time, and her body was covered with a single piece of cloth. Even in that state Duḥśāsana by pulling that cloth attempted to make her naked. Karṇa began to insult her by hurling vulgar words of abuse at her. Draupadī's dishonour reached the climax when wicked Duryodhana invited her by gesture to sit on his left thigh. It was the height of cruelty practised on a helpless and virtuous Indian woman. The sight was too much for Bhimasena to bear. Out of sheer intensity of anger his lips began to quiver, and sparks of fire began to emanate through every pore of his being, and yet he could do nothing in the absence of any instruction or hint from Yudhiṣṭhira. The righteous Yudhiṣṭhira, on his part, was bound by his words; therefore, although he saw all these outrageous acts of tyranny being enacted before his very eyes, he sat still and mute maintaining his peace. Draupadī raised a loud lamentation,

with tears in her eyes she appealed to the whole royal court for her protection, but all the courtiers expressed only their helplessness with downcast eyes. Finally, Draupadī, having lost all hope of worldly support, shouted from the bottom of her heart for Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's help, and the Lord hearing the wail of the helpless devotee faced with a terrible ordeal, saved her honour. Let us in this situation study the patience shown by Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira. A simple hint from his eyes would have that very moment reduced the royal court into a shambles, but at that critical time by maintaining his peace he has shown the world in a practical form what the true form of Patience is. All glory to Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira, the very image, and an incomparable image, of the spirit of Patience !

NON-ANGER, FORBEARANCE

Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira was the very embodiment of Non-anger and Forbearance. In the Vana Parva of the *Mahābhārata* it is related that on one occasion Draupadī tried her utmost to rouse anger in Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira's mind. She said: "O Lord ! I am King Drupada's daughter, the only wedded wife of the Pāṇḍavas, and Dhṛṣṭadyumna's younger sister; if you do not feel angry with the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra seeing me wandering helplessly in the forest, and observing your own younger brothers oppressed by the terrible sufferings of forest life, it appears that you do not possess any fire or anger in you. But, O Lord, he who lacks fire or anger, and does not feel angry even with a worthy object of anger, is not fit to be recognized as a Kṣatriya. It is, no doubt, the bounden

duty of a Kṣatriya to show forbearance to a well-wisher, to one who commits some wrong through error or foolishness, or to one who craves pardon after committing a wrong; but it is no duty of a Kṣatriya to forgive one who commits wrong, again and again, with deliberate intention. Therefore, O Lord, these sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who deliberately and constantly heap wrong upon wrong, are no objects of forgiveness but are objects of anger. They must be chastized with proper punishment." Hearing these words, Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira replied: "O Draupadi, I agree to what you say; but he who forgives even a proper object of anger saves both himself and the object of anger from terrible and imminent danger.* Therefore, O Draupadi, how can I make place in my heart for the lodgment of anger, which has been renounced by all strong-minded, self-possessed souls ?† A man who gives way to anger may be guilty of committing the worst possible sin. He kills his elders. He censures men who are great on account of their wisdom. A son subject to anger may kill his father, and a wife similarly possessed may be guilty of killing her husband. He who is subject to anger wholly loses the sense of what he ought to do and what he ought not; he will commit errors at every step. He will lose all sense of decency of expression

* आत्मानं च परांश्वैव श्रायते महतो भयात् ।
कृथन्तमपतिकृध्यन् द्वयोरेष चिकित्सकः ॥

(Vana Parva xxix. 9)

† तं क्रोधं वर्जितं धीरैः कथमसद्विक्षरेत् ।
एतद् द्वौपदि सन्धाय न मे मनुः प्रवर्थते ॥

(Vana Parva xxix. 8)

and will utter,* without control, whatever comes uppermost to his mind. Therefore, tell me, dear, how can I entertain anger, which is the root of the greatest of evils ? O Draupadi, it is an error to regard anger as the fire of righteousness (तेज). Truly speaking, where there is fire of righteousness, there can be no anger. The wise say, and I also agree with the view, that he who cannot be swayed by anger, or he who when touched by anger pacifies it through discrimination, can be truly said to possess the fire of righteousness (तेज); the man in anger cannot be said to possess that fire. Listen, Draupadi, he who forgives even a proper object of anger attains the eternal region. The great sage Kaśyapa declares that practice of forgiveness is right Dharma, sacrifice, Veda and the substance of the scripture. He who is aware of this character of forgiveness, forgives everybody.† In forgiveness is Brahma, past, future, austerity, purity and truth all combined. The entire creation is held together by forgiveness.‡ In forgiveness lie the fire or energy of the righteous, Brahma of the practicants of austerity, truth of the truthful, sacrifice of the sacrificer and peace of those who

control the mind.* How shall I renounce forgiveness on which rest Truth, Brahma, sacrifice and the pure regions ?† He who practises forgiveness goes to a better and superior region than followers of the paths of Austerity, Knowledge and Action. He who practises forgiveness under every circumstance attains Brahma. Therefore, all should constantly practise forgiveness. O Draupadi, renouncing anger, you also should give place to and hold forgiveness in your heart."‡

What a beautiful lesson, and how elevated the sentiment ! These words of righteous Yudhiṣṭhira, addressed to his wife, when both were oppressed by the terrible sufferings of a life of exile in the forest, were typical illustrations of Non-Anger, engraved in letters of gold ! There is hardly any character in whom even after scrutiny may be found such a beautiful combination and blend of the fire of righteousness, forgiveness and mental peace.

TRUTH

Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira's devotion to Truth is recognized even by the scriptures and has become famous as a tradition throughout the world. Once

* वाच्यावाच्ये हि कुपितो न प्रजानाति कहिंचित् ।
नाकार्यमस्ति कुरुत्य नावाच्यं विष्टते तथा ॥

(Vana Parva xxix. 5)

† क्षमा धर्मः क्षमा यज्ञः क्षमा वेदाः क्षमा श्रुतम् ।
य एतदेवं जानाति स सर्वं क्षन्तुमर्हते ॥

(Vana Parva xxix. 36)

‡ क्षमा ब्रह्म क्षमा सत्यं क्षमा भूतं च भावि च ।
क्षमा तपः क्षमा शौचं धन्येद धृतं बगत् ॥

(Vana Parva xxix. 37)

* क्षमा तेजस्विनां तेजः क्षमा ब्रह्म तपस्विनाम् ।
क्षमा सत्यं सत्यवतां क्षमा यज्ञः क्षमा शमः ॥

(Vana Parva xxix. 40)

† तां क्षमां तादृशीं कृष्णे कथमसद्विष्ट्यजेत् ।
यसां ब्रह्म च सत्यं च यज्ञा लोकाश्च विषिताः ॥

(Vana Parva xxix. 41)

‡ क्षन्तव्यमेव सततं पुरुषेण विजानता ।
यदा हि क्षमये सर्वं ब्रह्म सम्पृष्टे तदा ॥

(Vana Parva xxix. 42)

Bhimasena, drawing the attention of Yudhişthira to the sufferings of the brothers as well as of Draupadī, proposed that the kingdom lost in gambling should be reconquered by force.* Here is Yudhişthira's answer to the proposal: "O Bhimasena, kingdom, progeny, fame, wealth—all these combined will not be equal to even the one-sixteenth fraction of Truth. I regard practice of Truth to be of greater importance than attainment of immortality, than even life itself. Know this vow of mine to be true.† I cannot budge an inch from the solemn declaration made before the Kurus. Just as after sowing the seed the cultivator waits for the crop, even so I would advise you to wait till the completion of the period of exile in the forest and one year's incognito life." Bhimasena, again, urged: "O King, we have already gone through thirteen months of exile; why do you not take this to be thirteen years, according to the injunctions of the Vedas?"‡ But the righteous Yudhişthira

took this to be practice of Truth in a deceptive form, and refused to accept the suggestion. Firmly and resolutely he stood his ground for practice of Truth in its right, unblemished form.

The truthfulness of Yudhişthira was believed in even by his enemies. It was the glory of his devotion to Truth which caused the wheels of his chariot ever move the breadth of four fingers above the ground. So great, indeed, is the glory of the practice of Truth! In a portion of the *Mahābhārata* it is stated that on one occasion the fruits of the performance of one thousand horse-sacrifices had been weighed in a balance as against the fruit of the practice of only Truth, and it was proved that Truth outweighed all those fruits.§

But what was the moral height at which stood Maharaj Yudhişthira, the very embodiment of Truth, and where stand the people in general today, who sacrifice Truth almost at every step!

(To be continued)

* Vede *Mahabharata*, *Vana Parva*, Chap. 33-34.

† मम प्रतिष्ठां च निरोध सत्यां
वृणे धर्ममृतजीविताच्च ।
राज्यं च पुत्राश्च यशो धनं च
सर्वं न सत्यस्य कलासुपैति ॥

(Vana. xxxiv. 22)

‡ असाभिरुपिताः सम्यग्वने मासाख्योदशः । परिमाणेन तान् पश्य तावतः परिवत्सरात् ॥

(Vana. xxxv. 32)

'यो मासः स संवत्सरः' इति श्रुतेः ।

§ अश्वमेधसहस्रं च सत्यं च तुलया धूतम् । अश्वमेधसहस्राद्बि सत्यमेव विशिष्यते ॥

(Śānti. cxlii. 26)

The Bhagavata Purana*

An Aspect of Study

BY GIRINDRA NARAYAN MALLIK, M. A., B. L.

Like the great national epic, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* also may be regarded not as a single poetic production but a whole literature. The main theme of the *Bhāgavata* is a critical exposition of the monistic philosophy of the Vedānta as well as an interpretation of the Gāyatrī text which is regarded as the Mahāvākyā of the four Vedas. According to Śrī Jīva Goswamī this main theme has been tacitly indicated in the first Śloka of the first chapter of Skandha I of the *Bhāgavata*. The various philosophical doctrines centring round this main theme have been systematized by the same author and dealt with under six topics in his treatise called the *Satsandarbha*. These doctrines are identified with the cult of Bhakti, and, as has been unambiguously stated by the author, the main object of writing the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is to make known to the world the doctrines of Bhakti, which, according to him, is the true import of the Vedānta. To popularize, again, the abstract Vedānta philosophy and ethics there have been introduced here (a) numerous legends and stories relating to cosmology, genealogy, etc.; (b) descriptions showing the geographical and political condition of India at the time; (c) legends of

saints, ancient kings and heroes; (d) aphorisms containing doctrines of renunciation, self-sacrifice and love for all beings; (e) specimens of true poetry of the type of classical Sanskrit; (f) fables, parables, fairy tales and moral stories full of edifying knowledge; (g) extracts showing how Nature is the best educator of human beings and the regulator of their conduct leading to the attainment of Self-realization.

In the present article we propose to deal very briefly with the last two topics mentioned above.

In the eleventh Skandha of *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* the story of an Avadhūta Brahman has been described. The Brahman used to wander fearlessly with his mind detached from the things of the world and revelling in supreme joy. Accidentally meeting him the high-souled Yadu asked him the cause of such supreme state of his mind manifesting outwardly in his serene countenance. He, in reply, said—"In Nature there are various things that serve as my preceptors, viz., Earth, Air, Ether, Water, Fire, the Moon, the Sun, the Pigeon, the Huge Serpent called Ajagara, the Ocean, the Insect, the Bee, the Elephant, the Black-bee, the Deer, the Fish, Pingala

*The article had been sent to us for publication by the late Prof. Girindra Narayan Mallik sometime before he breathed his last. We extremely regret that it could not be published during the life-time of the esteemed writer.

—Editor.

(the prostitute), the Osprey, the Honey-collector, the Spider, the Boy, the Girl, the Blacksmith and the Insect called Peśaskṛt. From them I received all instructions, though not verbal, in the shape of positive and negative injunctions, and these help me in attaining that state of mind which brings supreme beatific joy."

(1) Earth: The earth appears as the repository of patience and forbearance inasmuch as she does not deviate from her own fixed position even though trampled upon by all kinds of creatures dwelling there; similarly, a sage bears patiently and without the least mental perturbation all the vicissitudes of life brought about by Destiny. Evidently the earth teaches us two moral and religious virtues—patience and forbearance.

The mountains and trees are parts of the earth. Giving rise to rivers and streams the mountain does good to the whole creation, and the tree ungrudgingly allows itself to be cut and torn and bends low. Thus from these two things of Nature the lesson of humanitarian service is learnt, and the cardinal virtues of ungrudging patience and humility are acquired.

(2) Air: It has twofold function. It exists within the bodily organism in the shape of the vital air or the principle underlying the functions of the sympathetic nervous system. Outside also it exists as air, wind, etc. The vital air though very subtle keeps up its existence by means of the food taken from outside, and in that matter it is unconcerned with the distinction of the five

sense-objects. And so the sage being unmindful of the attractiveness of the sense-objects remains content only with that kind or amount of food which is necessary for the bare maintenance of his physical frame.

The wind which is always moving pervades all embodied things of the world without being attached thereto. Evidently, therefore, non-attachment is taught by the wind. The wind, again, scatters all around the sweet fragrance of flowers, etc., without expecting the least benefit in return. Thus the quality of disinterested friendship towards all is a lesson to be learnt from the wind.

(3) Ether: Ether is all-pervading. It exists within and without all movable and immovable things as well as in what appears to us as empty space. Yet the same ether suffers no contamination with the objects it pervades. It remains absolutely unaffected. From this it is to be learnt that the ultimate reality or Brahma is all-pervading and ever remains unaffected and unaltered even though remaining concealed within the things of the world that are always subject to change, decay and other defects.

Again, it is a scientifically established fact that fire, heat, water, food-ingredients and other things move here and there through the medium of ether, but the ether ever remains unaffected. In the same way, a sage always remains unaffected with whatever things and actions he comes in contact. The ether, therefore, is a great instructor in this respect.

(4) Water: Intrinsically water possesses the attributes of clearness, coolness

and gracefulness. These are transfused into the mind of a sage, for a sage's mind is free from all impurities, his Buddhi is tranquil and pure; his contact, association, conduct and speeches have always a cooling and graceful influence upon those with whom he comes in contact.

(5) Fire: Lustre and purificatoriness are the distinctive attributes of fire. A sage also ever shines with lustre owing to the great penance he undergoes. Himself remaining absolutely pure, he purifies the mind of all whom he comes in contact with. No impurity can affect fire in any way, and so the sage whose mind is wholly concentrated on God is never affected by any impurities whatsoever. Like the fire removing impurities in an apparent or hidden manner, the sage removes the sins of people directly or indirectly. In most cases he does purify others, remaining ever concealed from the public view.

(6), (7) The Sun and the Moon: The Sun, as the scientists say, is a planet. Save and except the rays coming out, nothing else have yet been discovered by science about the nature and characteristics of the sun taken as a whole entity. This much is now an ascertained fact that the sun as a substance manifests itself to the people of the earth in the shape of endless rays. Evidently there is a relation of difference as well as non-difference between the sun and its rays. From this phenomenon the lesson is derived that similar is the relation between the Supreme Ātmā on the one hand and matter and spirit on the other.

The sun, again, by means of its radiating rays dries up the waters of the sea into vapour, which, again, being

condensed into clouds sends down rain-water to the earth. The sun, in other words, appropriates the wealth of vapour only to give it back thousand times for the good of the world. In the same way a sage gets sense-objects not for his own enjoyments but only to distribute them amongst suitors.

The moon is an entity underlying its digits, and the increase or decrease in the digits does not affect the moon in any way. Similarly, the changes that take place from birth to death belong to the body, whereas the soul ever remains unaltered and unaffected.

(8) Then comes a beautiful parable about the pigeon. Once in a certain forest there lived a pair of pigeons. In course of time some young ones were born to them, and the pigeons passed their days happily. But as ill luck would have it, a fowler entrapped the young pigeons during the absence of their parents who had gone out to procure food. On coming back the female pigeon saw the young ones entrapped and began to lament most piteously and out of affection approached them and thereby had herself caught in the trap. Thereupon the male pigeon too on seeing the miserable condition of the whole lot began to lament. "Alas!" he said, "my earthly merit in the previous existence is very small, or I would not have been reduced to such a miserable plight before the full satisfaction of my desires. Being bereft of my wife and children how can I live in this lonely house?" So thinking the pigeon in delusion voluntarily flew off into the trap and away went the fowler homewards taking hold of all the pigeons.

Now the moral of this little parable is this. Like the birds a householder with his mind ever revelling in the carnal pleasures of life and affected with the pairs of opposites like happiness and sorrow, heat and cold, hunger and thirst and the like, never attains to the calm and tranquil state of the Self and often falls a prey to depression and misery. Of all earthly existences human birth is no doubt the best; it is, in fact, the door to salvation kept wide open. Blessed with such an enviable situation, if man gets attached to his earthly relations like the pigeon-pair, he is sure to drop down from a great height to an abysmal depth. The instance of the pigeons ought to be a wholesome warning to all human beings in respect of their conduct in worldly affairs.

(9) The next source of instruction is the goat-devouring huge serpent called Ajagara (Python). It is the nature of such serpents not to move about but to lie flat in a deep jungle or in a mountain-cave for days together, feeding only upon air. It devours only those animals that accidentally come near it. In the same way, a true sage is one who having no attachment to his bodily frame never moves here and there for procuring varieties of relishing food as is the case with all worldly people. His mind being completely withdrawn from other things is wholly engrossed in Divine Consciousness. To keep up, however, his body as an instrument for carrying on his devotional exercises, he takes whatever food comes to his lot, be that tasteful or not. It may be that for days together he remains without food, but that does not affect

him in the least, so immersed is he in the ocean of nectarean bliss of God-realization. Such state of inaction, however, does not imply any lack of strength and prowess, for a true sage is one who is possessed of sufficient strength of body, senses and mind but does not apply it in matters non-spiritual. The real worth of a man does not lie in his lack and non-application of strength in earthly matters for that may imply a diseased body or a deranged mind. It is the power of suppressing such tendencies and faculties that counts in the proper valuation of a man from the divine standpoint.

(10) The ocean or sea also is a good source of religious instruction to human beings. Like the sea a true sage is calm and tranquil in the mental state. His look is grave and serene. The depth of his divine feeling and consciousness cannot be gauged. His outward conduct is in most cases not a key to his inner mind. Being a repository of spiritual lustre he is not overpowered by others, just as the sea is unapproachable owing to ferocious aquatic animals.

(11) Next we propose to deal with the instructive value of flies and insects.

The bright lustre of kindled fire is attractive and delusive to a moth. In ignorance it thinks the bright fire to be an object of enjoyment and forthwith moves towards it and suffers destruction. Similarly, the Māyā-Śakti of Bhagavān has created the world replete with objects of enjoyment—women, gold, i. e., wealth, clothes, ornaments and the like. The same Divine Potency, Māya, has deluded man's mind and turned it away from the blissful contact of God. Out

of ignorance and delusion man forgets his natural function of enjoying an unending contiguity to God. He thinks worldly objects alone as worth enjoying and worshipping and so devotes himself whole-heartedly to such enjoyments. But, alas, the transient nature of worldly objects brings upon man nothing but misery and despondency. An abysmal darkness spreads its veil over him. The supreme light of God-realization is utterly forgotten by him as the means of replacing the gloom of darkness. The example of the flies and insects warns man against this catastrophe.

(12) Like the moths and other insects the bee also is an insignificant creature in Nature. Yet it is the source of two valuable lessons. In the first place, it teaches us that to attain God-realization we must not be addicted to women, wealth, bodily comforts, luxuries, etc. Such addiction means our bondage just in the same way as a bee greedy of honey sits on a lotus but gets entangled there when the lotus closes its petals. Again, we should not eat much, but very little, like the bee.

Secondly, like the bee gathering honey little by little from every flower it meets, an aspirant seeking God-realization should cleverly collect truths from all scriptures to whatever culture they may belong. By so saying, the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* gives an indication of the catholic spirit of the cult of Bhakti whereby it does not belittle any religious scripture in the world provided it is not incompatible with the attainment of Self-realization. An aspirant, again, must not hoard wealth and think of tomorrow's food, this is consistent

with the fact of his non-attachment to the body.

(13) The elephant as a source of instruction is next explained.

An expert elephant-catcher sometimes manages to arouse the passion of an elephant towards a she-elephant, and out of infatuation the elephant runs towards his mate and thereby recklessly slips down into a deep pit covered all over with grass and rubbish. Such passionate madness on the part of the elephant, leading to his fall and the consequent state of being caught, serves no doubt as a warning against man's addiction to women which results in nothing but his bondage. If again the woman be other than the man's lawfully married wife, then there is the additional risk of his life being taken by the woman's husband or another paramour. Thus the lesson derived from the elephant is religious as well as moral.

(14) The honey-collector is a source of instruction in the following way. The bee stores up honey only to be enjoyed by others. Similarly a man who hoards up wealth but does neither enjoy it himself nor spends it for philanthropic purposes has his whole wealth enjoyed by others or stolen by thieves. The very magnificent moral quality of liberality and philanthropy is thus learnt from the bee and the honey-collector by one who is endowed with a deep insight and an inquisitive mind.

(15) The deer as an instructor to mankind:

Being chased by a huntsman the deer tries to run away; but when the huntsman plays on his flute it gets en-

tranced with the sweet music and stands still, thereby allowing itself to be caught. In the same way an aspirant desiring salvation must not pay attention to any folk-song or discourse other than divine songs or prayers. If he does so, he will be caught and driven far away from the path of salvation. Besides, the deer is to be looked upon as an embodiment of beauty, innocence and energy; and so it calls upon mankind to realize beauty everywhere, to be free from guilt and to be energetic in spiritual exercises.

(16) From the fish we get the lesson that one should not be addicted to the palate, for in that case he will be overtaken not only by physical death but also by moral and spiritual death, just as a fish overpowered with greed is caught by the angler's hook.

(17) Then comes a beautiful parable about Pingalā, a public woman.

In ancient times there lived in Videha a prostitute, Pingalā by name. That passionate woman once stationed herself in the front gate of her house with charming decorations of the body and amorous postures with the sole object of seducing lovers. Seeing many rich and fine gentlemen pass by the road one after another, that passionate and avaricious lady anxiously thought each one of them as her paramour come to satisfy her animal passion and present her with rich gifts; but, alas ! none responded to her passive call and all went away without casting even a look at her. Time hang heavily on her, and she waited and waited till the late hours of the night. Her hankering for gross sensuous pleasure increased more and more till the climax was reached. At

last she attained the state of utmost dejection of spirits with all expectation gone. Such extreme state, however, miraculously changed her mind, and she forthwith plunged herself into a penitent mood. She began to repent severely for her faults and sinful cravings. The fire of repentance, thus kindled in her heart, at once burnt all her mental impressions into ashes. In her reason, thus purified, there arose God-consciousness and this illumined her whole self.

Now the moral of this beautiful parable is briefly this. Hopes and expectations, and in fact all desires are the root of evils, and a total annihilation of desires is supreme bliss. The further significance of the parable is that the rise of true Knowledge and the attainment of spiritual realization knows no locality, no lineage, nor time and circumstances. Brother Laurence attained Self-realization while engaged in the kitchen. Such instances are not rare in India.

(18) The Kurara bird(Osprey) is a source of inspiration in the following way. The inordinate hankering of worldly people after the transitory pleasures to be derived from sense-objects is often followed by miseries. Hence the best way of avoiding miseries is to rid oneself of his addiction to such carnal pleasures of life. Nothing short of renunciation can lead to salvation. And so Jesus Christ advised his followers to renounce everything in the world—their wealth, apparel, fame and everything else—if they wanted to enjoy a permanent abode in the Kingdom of Heaven. According to the Hindu cult of devotion also it is only an Akiñchana Bhakta that can aspire to the beatific joy that is

eternally displayed and relished by the God of Love—Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

(19) A boy or a child is not to be ignored as such. The distinctive features of childhood consist in the following facts. (a) A child never thinks itself honoured or dishonoured on any account; (b) it does not suffer from the anxieties common to all householders possessing dwelling houses, property, children and other relations; (c) its mind is always full of pure and unmixed joy; (d) as if just dropped from the kingdom of supreme love, its mind is uncontaminated with sins or transgressions; (e) it is often fond of making sports and enjoying pleasures by itself, with no company but its own self.

The valuable lesson to be derived from such characteristics of childhood is that the object of man's spiritual efforts should always be to attain the state of pure delight of the individual self in the revelation of the Highest Self. In fact, as has been laid down in the Upaniṣad texts, a released soul should be आत्मरति (delighting in the self) and आत्मक्रीड (sporting with the self).

(20) Then comes the case of the girl being the source of a valuable instruction. This has been illustrated by means of a short parable.

Once upon a time some gentlemen came to the house of a certain girl, during her parents' absence, in order to select her as the bride. The girl duly honoured them. To feed them she began to grind paddy in a lonely place. The conchshell-bangles in her hands produced a great jingling sound; and, since the act of grinding, indicative as it is of poverty, was to be kept a secret, she removed all

the bangles excepting two in each hand. But the noise still continued. To stop it she removed one piece more, and there was no more the jingling sound.

Now from this incident of the girl the Avadhūta Brahman learnt the following lesson. "Many people living together in a place are often the cause of quarrels and disputes; even if there are two people there is the risk of their falling into mutual conversation. In either case, meditation upon God is obstructed. Hence for a sage the best course would be to dwell in a secluded place alone and thereby he will be in a position to devote his whole mind and self to the thought of God."

(21) A blacksmith as a source of instruction may be thus explained. Evidently he always works at his bellows. And like the bellows a Yogi should by all means restrain his breath and forsaking all sloth should try to withdraw his mind from all worldly objects and fix it upon the Paramātma.

(22) The serpent teaches us the following qualities of a wandering saint, viz,—(a) roaming or moving alone, (b) having no fixed abode, (c) with carelessness ever forsaken, and (d) having the outward conduct and manners not an index to one's own mind; for these attributes are observable in the serpent.

(23) The spider is a source of instructions of vital importance. These instructions enable a sage to realize and explain the relationship that exists between Brahma, the Supreme Reality, and the universe of being. By an observing eye it is no doubt discerned that the spider draws out from within itself very fine fibres, prepares a net thereby,

moves about in a sportive manner within that net, and after a while again withdraws the net within itself. Evidently all these creative and destructive processes are performed by the spider quite unaided. And so we find in the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhāgavata Purāna* and other scriptural texts that the whole philosophy of creation has been explained in a nutshell by analogy to the incident of the spider and the net. The only Absolute Reality is Brahma, which is One without a second. The derivative meaning of Brahma—That which is itself the Greatest and makes things great—signifies that It is endowed with endless potencies. Of these potencies Ānanda is the highest. And because Brahma is an Infinite Reality, Ānanda also is Infinite. From the exuberance of Ānanda creation takes place as a mere sport without being motivated in the least. The universe, in other words, emanates from the One Reality Brahma. And because the Brahma is One without a second, the efficient as well as the material causality of the universe lies with Brahma. Like the spider, the One Reality draws out from within Itself the universe which again is a network of relationship. The creative process thus is a sportive pastime with Brahma and this continues for some time, and all the time the Creator pervading each minute particle of the world makes sports so to say. Again, the same Brahma,—why, nobody can conceive,—effects dissolution of the universe, which means that the universe is withdrawn from the gross to the subtle state within Brahma. It is needless to say that a better and higher philosophy of creation cannot be con-

ceived—in real fact, it has never been conceived anywhere else.

(24) Lastly, the educative value of a certain species of insects is thus explained. It is the nature of such insects to assume form of other stronger insects by which they are chased and terrified. The adoption of the new form, however, takes place without their giving up the original form. Strange though the phenomenon might appear, this is one of Nature's freaks. Similarly, the contemplative mind of a devotee becomes transformed into divinity in consequence of an incessant flow of devotional spirit.

In this way we have tried our best to show how the author of the *Bhāgavata Purāna* is not only a sage, a philosopher, an expounder of various metaphysical, religious and ethical doctrines, and an exponent of the sociological and political theories of ancient India, but also a true poet of Nature endowed with a wonderful power of keen observation.

In this connection it is to be noted that the conception of Nature plays a prominent part in the poetry not only of ancient Indian poets but also of many nineteenth century English poets. Of the latter class, Wordsworth's name stands prominent. In the *Intimations Ode*, and more in the *Excursion*, Wordsworth has said a great deal about Nature and has given out prominently his faith that man might learn much wisdom from the study of Nature. The first thing that strikes our attention here is that to Wordsworth Nature appears as essentially benevolent and permeated with the spirit of universal harmony and

universal love. Yet it must not be forgotten that the poetic idealism of Wordsworth centres round his spiritual outlook which alone, I think, makes him so very familiar to Indian minds. Underlying his conception of Nature there lies the prominent factor that the law of Nature is based on sentiments breathed into our hearts by God Himself and is but the expression in human conduct of a universal divine law existing independently of us, and that the most prominent characteristic of God's Nature is His universal benevolence, universal harmony and universal love. Thus it appears that with Wordsworth these three are the essential qualities that Nature always teaches mankind. Evidently Wordsworth's attitude towards Nature is guided by a religious metaphysics. Nature according to Wordsworth is not only a teacher of mankind, but a better teacher than books. Science, moral and physical, seems to have got a subordinate place in Wordsworth's poetry. This, however, is to be understood in the sense that Wordsworth is not recommending any more than Rousseau an abandonment of books and learning (science) but is simply urging a restoration of the balance between book-learning and the direct inspirations of Nature. In support of this statement of ours we may very well quote the following lines from the "Tables Turned":—

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by
health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.
One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.
Such is the lore that Nature brings;

Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous form of
things,
We murder to dissect.
Enough of Science and of Art,
Close up these barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a
heart
That watches and receives.

From the above comparative study of the two authors, Vyāsa and Wordsworth, it thus appears that according to both of them the educative value of Nature cannot be over-estimated. Both have looked upon Nature as the norm of conduct—as the best guide in the matter of man's spiritual uplift and spiritual realization. But while the great Indian sage, as appears above from the Avadhūta Brahman's account of his own spiritual advancement, has looked upon Nature with the eye of a spiritual anatomist, has dissected the whole body of Nature into the diverse elements with the sole object of showing how each element contributes greatly to the spiritual and moral uplift of mankind, the great English poet, on the other hand, has, by what is called aesthetic synthesis, intimately associated himself with the beauty and grandeur, with the peacefulness, harmony and benevolence that pervades the whole of Nature. Whatever the difference in methodology might be, there can be no denying the fact that such an appreciation of the educative aspect of Nature is all the more necessary specially in these days of dearth of real spiritual guides. The more we shall learn to take recourse to God's own form—the vast expanse of Nature—as our spiritual guide, the greater prospect there will be of genuine God-intoxication and God-realization, which alone can do good to the modern suffering world.

Five Specifics for Self-Purification-II

Second Series

(Continued from the previous number)

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

SATSANGA OR ASSOCIATION WITH SAT

Place of residence, food, water and the rest of the ten principal aids mentioned above serve the purpose of good association when they are of the right sort, as has already been indicated. Whatever works for the elimination of evil thoughts and gives rise to high and noble thoughts and directs the attention of our heart towards God is Sat (real), because it establishes contact with Sat, or the Divine Reality. Association with it, therefore, is Satsanga. All objects of sight, hearing, talk, food, drink, study, writing, the means of earning livelihood, social atmosphere and methods of worship, etc., must be, as far as possible, so selected as to become aids to the mending of our character, to our upward progress. As by evil association, our will and intelligence become Rajasic and Tamasic, so by good association they rise gradually above the Tamasic and Rajasic modes of nature and are transformed into the Sattvic state. Sattvic will and intelligence make all distinctions rightly and under their influence man knows his real duty and stands by it.* The eyes of man blinded by dark-

ness are opened by the light of good association alone and it is only by the power of that association that he awakes spiritually and makes an attempt towards growth.

WHAT COMES OUT OF SATSANGA ?

1. The mind finds pleasure in talking about God, in chanting and hearing the glories and names of God and in meditating on God.
2. Through the hearing of the glories, power, secrets, and wonders of Divine Love and the singing of God's names and glories, attachment to worldly objects and desire for sense-pleasures get destroyed and yield place to attachment for God and a craving for God-realization.
3. Lust and other enemies lurking in the mind get utterly destroyed and fearlessness and the other twenty-six divine qualities appear and flourish.
4. All sense of favourableness and unfavourableness, likes and dislikes, mineness, I-ness and ignorance disappear.
5. It becomes natural to engage the body, mind and wealth, in the service of all beings of the world.

* प्रवृत्ति च निवृत्ति च कार्यकार्ये भयाभये ।
बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेति बुद्धिः सा पार्थं सात्त्विकी ॥
(Gita XVIII, 30)

"That understanding is Sattvic which knows what is right action, and what

is right cessation of action, what must be done and what ought not to be done, what would cause fear and what would not cause fear, what is bondage and what is freedom."

6. It becomes possible to see God everywhere in all beings, at all times, and at all places.

7. The truth about God being realized, one comes to possess eternal bliss, supreme peace and transcendent divine love.

8. In the face of the greatness of that privilege of service of Supreme God, the sweetest, dearest and nearest object of the heart, the infinite ocean of beauty and sweetness, the exalted state of salvation pales into insignificance.

The Lord Himself says:—

न रोधयति मां योगे न सांख्यं धर्मं एव च ।
न स्वाध्यायस्तपस्त्यागो नेष्टापूर्तं न दक्षिणा ॥
ब्रतानि यज्ञश्छन्दांसि तीर्थानि नियमा यमाः ।
यथावरुणे सत्सङ्गः सर्वसङ्गापहो हि माम् ॥

(Bhāgavata XI. xii. 1-2)

"O Uddhava, neither Yoga, nor Knowledge, nor reading of scriptures, nor austerities, nor self-denial, nor works of public benefit, nor gifts, nor religious performances, nor sacrifices, nor study of the Vedas, nor visit to sacred places, nor control of mind, nor control of senses can win Me so easily as does Satsanga or saintly association, which negatives the effect of all other associations."

What object or method of discipline can excel Satsanga, which captivates the Lord Himself ?

Man should attempt even at the risk of his life to seek and discover those objects or those saints from which or from whom he can derive this Satsanga. This seeking is his Sādhana. If one succeeds in finding a real saint and recognizing him, the highest goal of life is assured to him. But so long as a real

saint is not found, one should establish contact with pure things, pure spiritual literature and men of a Sattvic temperament devoted to spiritual seeking. Association cultivated with such seekers, or with a man of realization, if one succeeds in discovering him by the grace of God, and hearing their spiritual teachings with love and reverence, followed by effort to act up to them, is an elevated form of Satsanga.

It is extremely difficult to recognize real saints and real Mahātmās. For our criterion of judging them is our limited intelligence wholly attached to worldly objects, enslaved by desires, deluded by ignorance and dissipated in all directions, while there is nothing in such saints which could be judged by this criterion. Although they are free from every form of evil, we may not understand their actions by our small misguided intelligence, possessing little or no faith and enveloped in darkness, and accuse them of things entirely absent in them. As a matter of fact, a saint can never be recognized by any external sign or indication. For a man, who though not saintly in any sense, may pose and manage to appear as such throughout his life, whereas a real saint looking like an ordinary man in outward appearance and activities may not reveal the reality about him throughout his life. Saints can be recognized only when by their grace they allow themselves to be recognized. But lack of faith is our greatest obstacle. We do not possess the will to receive their grace. With lack of faith we judge them by our own criterion, and the least imperfection that we may wrongly detect according to that

standard in any of them makes us bold enough to declare him to be no saint at all. There are many saints who so carefully conceal their identity that it is almost impossible for anybody to recognize them. They, therefore, remain practically unfrequented. But although this is so, it is necessary to sound a warning that in the present-day world, full of cant and hypocrisy, one should be careful about accepting anybody as a saint, a Mahātmā or a Superman.

He whose mind, word and body cast a Sattvic influence and association with whom tends to develop the divine qualities as well as devotion to God, his company should be cultivated. And he who may externally appear good, but whose company leads to the growth of the demoniac qualities and proneness of the mind to be away from God, his company should be carefully avoided.

In the scriptures we find recorded here and there many signs of saints and Mahātmās, of which a few are given below:—

तितिक्षवः कारुणिकाः सुहृदः सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
अजातशत्रवः शान्ताः साधवः सातुरपूर्णाः ॥
मय्यनन्येन भावेन भक्ति कुर्वन्ति ये दृढाम् ।
मल्कृते त्यक्तमर्णास्त्यक्तवजनवान्यवाः ॥
मदाश्रयाः कथा मृष्टाः शृणवन्ति कथयन्ति च ।
तपन्ति विविधातापा नैतान् मद्रतचेतसः ॥
त एते साधवः साधि सर्वसङ्केतविजिताः ।
सङ्गतेष्व ते प्रार्थ्यः सङ्गदेहिरा हि ते ॥

(Bhāgavata III. xxv. 21—24)

In His role as Kapila the Lord declares to his mother Devahūti:

"Those who are not overtaken by grief or joy in the face of adversity or prosperity and are by nature patient and full of compassion for others, who are selfless friends of

all beings, equally loving to all, who know no enemy and are calm and virtuous in character with saintliness as their only ornament, who knowing the truth about Me love Me with a firm devotion and have abandoned all their works and their worldly relations for My sake, who rely on Me and speak and hear about My pious and sweet deeds, are the saints with their heart centred on Me whom the troubles and trials of the world do not effect. O righteous mother, persons of this sort, who are free from all attachments, can alone mitigate the evils arising from attachment to worldly pleasures. They are the persons with whom one should seek association."

Similarly, the Lord Himself declared to Uddhava, the prince of devotees:—

कृषालुरकृतदोहस्तितिःुः सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
सत्यसारोऽनवद्यात्मा समः सर्वोपाकारः ॥
कामैरहतधीर्दान्तो मृदुः शुचिरकिञ्चनः ।
अनीहो मितभुक् शान्तः स्थिरो मच्छरणो मुनिः ॥
अप्रमत्तो गभीरात्मा धृतिमाजितपद्मुणः ।
आमानी मानदः कल्पो मैत्रः कारणिकः कविः ॥

(Bhāgavata XI. xi. 29—31)

"He who is compassionate to all beings and is not inimical to anybody, he who is firm in endurance and is truthful, pure in mind, equal to all and is a benefactor of all; he whose mind is free from desire and whose senses are under control; he whose temper is mild and character highly ethical and noble; he who is humble, desireless and moderate in habits and who is quiet, calm and firm in mind and who has wholly surrendered himself to Me and thinks always of My divine qualities; who is faultless, serene, patient and has conquered hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, birth and death—the six modifications of

fire and life, mind and body; he who does not accept any honour and offers honour to all, is capable of shoulderung responsibilities, befriends all and is full of compassion and knowledge of Truth, is a saint, a Sādhu."

In the Śānti-Parva of the *Mahābhārata* we find the signs of a saint as described by Bhīṣma, the great, to Yudhiṣṭhīra, the righteous:

"Now I shall declare to you the signs of those whose company brings freedom from the fear of rebirth, or, in other words, brings salvation to a soul. They do not eat meat and are equal to likes and dislikes. The mode of living followed by the noble is dear to them. Their senses are always under control and they look upon pleasure and pain with an equal eye. They are truthful and charitable. They do not accept gifts from others and are compassionate. They serve the manes, gods and guests. They try to do good to all, lend their helping hand to all and are brave and obedient to Dharma. Friends to all creatures and capable of sacrificing their all when the occasion demands it, they stand firm in the path of truth. Their dealings are governed by Dharma. They neither adversely criticize the conduct of ancient seers and saints nor menace anybody. They are neither fickle-minded nor terrible. They are firmly devoted to virtuous conduct. The spirit of non-injury to all gets well-established in them, and they always remain free from the influences of lust, anger, worldly attachments, and egoism. They confine themselves to their appointed role and follow Dharma for Dharma's sake, not for wealth or fa. e. Obedience to Dharma is as natural to them as their

daily ablutions, taking of food and performance of other bodily functions. They are free from fear, anger, fickleness and grief. Their obedience to Dharma is not an outward display. They are truthful and straightforward. They feel neither puffed up at gain nor grieved at loss. They always live firmly in the state of Sattva and are equal-minded. Loss and gain, grief and joy, dear and hateful, life and death, all these do not affect their balance of mind. They are resolute, and powerful; they have attained the highest realization and are firmly established in the right path."

The marks of saints have been described in the *Gītā*, chapter XII verses 13 to 20 in the course of its description of the virtues of devotees, and again in chapter XIV verses 22 to 25, while describing the characteristics of men who have transcended the Gunas, and in the *Bhāgavata*, Skandha XI, chapter II, verses 45 to 55, in the course of its description of Bhāgavatas, or men who have thoroughly identified themselves with God. Our scriptures are, indeed, full of descriptions of the signs of saints and their glories. With reference to the glory of association with them the *Bhāgavata* says:

रहुगणैतत्पसा न याति
न चेज्यया निर्वप्णाद् गृहद्वा।
न च्छन्दसा नैव जलग्निमूर्धे-
विना महापादरजोऽभिवेक्ष॥
(*Bhāgavata* V. xii. 12)

Mahātmā Jaḍabharata, addressing King Rahūgana, says:

"O Rahūgana, the knowledge of God and Divine Love cannot be gained by askesis, sacrifices, gifts, public good done by householders, study of the Vedas and worship of the water,

sun. It can be gained only by bathing oneself with the dust of the feet of saints."

यथोपश्रयमाणस्य भगवन्तं विभावसुम् ।
शीतं भयं तमोऽयेति साधून् संसेवत्सत्था ॥
निमज्जयेन्मज्जतां घोरे भवाञ्चे परमायनम् ।
सन्तो ब्रह्मविदः शान्ता नौर्दृढेवाप्नु मज्जताम् ॥
अन्नं हि प्राणिनां प्राणा आत्मानां शरणं त्वहम् ।
धर्मो वित्तं नृणा प्रेत्य सन्तोऽवार्गं विभवोऽरणम् ॥

(*Bhāgavata* XI. xxvi. 31—33)

The Lord says:

"O Uddhava, just as when one approaches the fire, cold, fear and darkness disappear even so through service of saints, the cold of sin, the fear of birth and death and the darkness of ignorance all disappear. Like a boat for the man drowning in water, the saints with their minds settled in peace are the greatest refuge for those who are desperately struggling through this dreadful ocean of the world. Just as food is the life of all living beings, I am the sole refuge of the distressed and Dharma is the wealth of the soul in life beyond, even so the saint is the greatest refuge of those who are distressed by the fear of the world."

प्रसङ्गमन्तरं पाशमालमनः कवयो विदुः ।
स एव साधुषु कृतो मोक्षदारमपावृतम् ॥

(*Bhāgavata* III. xxv. 20)

Lord Kapila says,

"It is well-known to the men of knowledge that association binds the soul in bondage which lasts for ever and never decays. But the same association when cultivated with saints opens the door to salvation."

There are two forms of Satsanga. One is a means to salvation through the purification of the mind and the other

is of such a high order that it is considered improper to compare even a moment of such association with the realization of Mokṣa, or salvation. The glory of the second form of Satsanga is naturally higher than that of the first. Śrī Sūta says in the *Bhāgavata*:

तुल्याम् लवेनापि न स्वर्णं नापुनर्मवम् ।
भगवत्सङ्गिसङ्गस्य मर्त्यानां किमुताग्निः ॥

(*Bhāgavata* I. xviii. 13)

"Even a moment's association with those who are associated with God as His lovers cannot be compared with the bliss of heaven, nor even with salvation which puts an end to the cycle of birth and death, not to mention the attainment of kingdom or opulence of this mortal world."

It is only by the unbounded grace of God that one can come in contact with a saint who has discarded even salvation for the sake of Divine Love. This does not mean that such great souls have become extinct in this age. Just as a real gem cannot be found everywhere even so one may not find them here and there. Saints and lovers of God do not live in groups, yet they can be seen and met with by the grace of God, if there is the necessary strength of faith and yearning for their sight. To see, to touch, to hear, to live with and remember them is infallible in the spiritual sense. Even though unrecognized, the very sight of them dispels one's sins and ignorance and does him the highest good.

But although it is true that their very sight is highly effective, the proper course for the seeker is to discover them, and serve them and act up to their teachings. When this course is adopted one derives great benefit even by serving an advanced Sadhaka-Mahātmā, a saint

yet on his way to perfection, in place of the great Mokṣa-sannyāsī, i. e., one who has renounced even the state of salvation, or the great soul, who has reached a very high degree of Self-knowledge. By service is not meant only living with him or serving him physically. To live near him is no doubt beneficial,* but to mould one's life according to his wishes will be a better form of service. He who lives with great souls and yet does not like to mould his life according to their wishes, does not as a matter of fact, render any service to them. One may derive the greatest good by living with a saint with his consent and carrying out his wishes. Although the effect is not immediately felt on account of the evil impressions accumulated in the mind through many lives, one should not give way to despair so as to think that the association has done him no good. The evil impressions are, at first, only suppressed and not altogether eliminated (and this is why the same old impressions repeatedly rise to the surface and make one feel that no progress has yet been achieved); but in case, the pressure is maintained, the impressions are, before long, utterly crushed and wholly destroyed without any vestige left behind. But so long as this is not achieved, one must patiently persevere in the service of saints. One must firmly believe that the association with them must in the end destroy all sins and bring him deliverance from the dreadful sea of worldly existence.

It must be remembered that Mahātmās are entirely free from evil

thoughts and vicious habits. Yet they maintain their body and mind for a time determined by their Prārabdha. What is it, if not the impressions, which holds them? In order to explain this puzzling phenomenon to the ignorant mind, a conventional Leśāvidyā (the last and the least vestige of ignorance) is supposed to exist in the perfectly purified nature of the saint. In fact, there is no such vestige of ignorance in them and because it is so, there is no possibility of any ill-feeling or vicious propensity arising or residing in their mind. Ill-feeling or vicious habits are foreign accretions to the mind indicating a deformation; they are not its proper virtue. They get almost destroyed even before a high stage of Sādhana is reached. It is then only that the mind is purified. And Truth is realized by a purified mind. It is therefore wrong to suppose that there could be any kind of failing in a Mahātmā. One should seek such Mahātmās and take refuge in them. If the seeker is true and sincere, a little of his seeking will enable him, by the grace of God, to come in contact with such Mahātmās. Association with them may not only deliver us from this world of suffering but can give us the rare gift of Divine Love. Remember the words of the great divine sage Devarṣi Nārada:

तदेव साध्यतां तदेव साध्यताम्।

(*Nārada Bhakti Sūtra*)

‘Cultivate that (association with saints) alone, cultivate that alone.’

(*To be continued*)

To live with a great soul without doing anything is also spiritually beneficial:

निरारम्भा इपि वर्य पुण्यक्षीलेनु साक्षुषु । पुण्यमेवान्तुयामेह पापं पापेषसेवनात् ॥

(*Mahābhārata, Vana, I. 27*)

“Even without doing any work, we gather virtue by living with the virtuous and sin by living with sinners.”

The Science of the Soul—V

(Sri-Bhasya)

(*Sri Rāmānuja's Bhasya on the Brahma-Sūtras*)

(*Continued from the previous number*)

By K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

Adhikarana IV. Sutra IV—

'तत्तु समन्वयात्' ॥

4. But it (that Brahma should be known from Sastra, i. e., Scripture) certainly results from the connection (of the Scripture with the highest aim of man).

Scripture clearly declares Brahma आनन्दो ब्रह्म, etc. We cannot lightly say that the texts do not mean what they say simply because they do not enjoin Pravṛtti (action) or Nivṛtti (cessation from action). Every Pramāṇa has its fruition in revealing its object (खण्डितव्यवसाधित्वात्सर्वप्रमाणानाम्). Purpose depends on Pramāṇa (प्रयोजनं हि प्रमाणानुगमनम्). Words like "A son is born to you" and "This is not a snake" give rise to joy or remove fear, even though they have nothing to do with Pravṛtti or Nivṛtti.

The Pūrvapakṣin (objector) may urge that though perception and other Pramāṇas may have as their aim the imparting of knowledge about the nature of things (वस्तुयात्प्रस्पावबोध) yet Scripture ought to aim at a practical purpose. He may, with reference to our illustration 'पुत्रस्ते जातः' (a son is born to you), urge that the words cause joy even though a son was not really born and that hence the sentence is no authority for the fact and that therefore Scripture is not a

Pramāṇa (proof) for the actual existence of things. At this stage the opponent may be reinforced by a critic from another quarter to the effect that Śruti does enjoin an act (Kārya) because Brahma which is pure Jñāna is connected with Avidyā and has to be disconnected. The opponent tackles that position and brushes it aside by urging that a person who says that a command constitutes the meaning of a sentence must specify the command and the qualification of the person and the fruit and the means and the person and that the qualification of the person should be of the nature either of cause (निमित्त) or result (कल्प), and that the Nimitta must exist already whereas it has to be acquired according to the critic and that in the case of Agnihotra the Nimitta is being alive and so it has to be performed as long as life lasts and in the same way the object of the injunction about the intuition of Brahma, would have to be carried out even after release and that the intuition of the nature of Brahma cannot be a result (कल्प) for then it would be impermanent like Swarga, and that there could be no Niyoga (command) because the Viṣaya (object) of a Niyoga has to be action whereas Brahma is not action. The opponent then meets the critic further by saying that if the world is unreal the removal

of the world would be by knowledge and not by an injunction (Niyoga) and that if the world is real, the injunction (Niyoga) must be Brahma or something else, and that if the Niyoga is Brahma the world could not exist at all as Brahma is eternal and that if the Niyoga is not Brahma but something else the latter is sure to perish at some time or other and hence the Niyoga will have no Āśraya (basis). The opponent points out also that if everything different from Brahma is destroyed, there would be no Phala (result) to be effected by the Niyoga. He argues further that the dissolution of the world cannot be the Kāraṇa (instrument) in the enjoined action, because there is no method of procedure (इतिकर्तव्य) which can be predicated of the instrument.

After the opponent has thus disposed of the first critic, another critic emerges and says that the texts mean what they say and show the existence of Brahma, because though they refer to a pre-existing thing (परिनिष्पन्नब्रह्मस्त्रूपपरता), yet there are injunctions to meditate, e.g. "Ātmā should be seen, heard, thought about and meditated upon" (*Chhāndoःya Upaniṣad*); "He must be sought and known" (*Do*); "Worship Him as Ātmā" (*Brihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*). The critic urges that meditation implies the object of meditation, i.e., Ātmā and that to define it there come such texts as सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म and सदेव सोम्यदमग्र आसीत् and एकमेवाद्वितीयम् and तत्सत्यम्, स आत्मा and नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन. The critic says that these show that Brahma alone is real and that everything else is unreal and is due to Avidyā and that thus it is through the enjoined meditation on Brahma we can get final liberation by becoming one with Brahma.

To displace this Dhyāna-vidhi theory there emerges a different critic who urges that when a man is told that what has caused fear to him is a rope and not a snake his fear vanishes; that as bondage is unreal and can be removed by Knowledge (Jñāna), no Vidhi is needed; that if Mokṣa is caused by a Vidhi, it would be non-eternal; that Dharma gives results only by giving rise to a body; that hence Mokṣa cannot be result therefrom as it is of the nature of Aśarīra (bodilessness); that an effect (साध्य) implies origination or attainment or modification or fitness (उत्पत्ति, प्राप्ति, विकृति, संस्कृति); that Mokṣa cannot be said to be accomplished in any of these senses; that the comprehension of texts merely puts an end to all obstructions in the way of Mokṣa (मोक्षप्रतिबन्धनिवृत्तिमात्रम्); that such Pratibandha Nivṛtti is of the nature of Pradhwaiṣabha and does not come to an end; that the texts ब्रह्म तेऽब्रह्मैव भवति. (He who knows Brahma verily becomes Brahma—*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*) and तमेव विदित्वातिगृह्युमेति, etc., (Knowing Him he crosses death—*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*) declare that Mokṣa follows on Jñāna and thus negatives the need for Niyoga (injunction); that the object of the texts is to remove Avidyā (अविद्याक्षिप्तभृत्विश्वितिपरत्वाच्चालस्य); that they show that Ātmā is not an object (विषय) but is subject (प्रत्यगात्मम्); that the texts turn us away from other cognitions (विमुखीकरण), that Mokṣa need not wait for coming till the body dies, just as for the termination of fear it is enough to recognize the rope and there need not be any destruction of the snake; that liberation comes from the realization of the nature of Brahma; and that Brahma is proved by non-mandatory texts like तत्त्वमसि and सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म and अयमात्मा ब्रह्म.

But the critic who advanced the Dhyāna-vidhi theory is not to be silenced and answers the above objections. He says that a mere comprehension of the meaning of the texts cannot bring about a cessation of the bondage, just as a mere statement that it is rope cannot remove fear till the statement causes an activity leading to perception of the thing; that words can never cause Pratyakṣa-jñāna which depends on the senses (शानसामग्री-विविद्याणयेवापरोक्षसाधनानि); that it cannot be said that meditation is a means of knowledge of the meaning of texts, because then there would be the fallacy of mutual dependence, meditation leading to knowledge of the texts and the latter leading to meditation; that it is illogical to say that meditation and comprehension of the meaning of texts have different objects or to say that knowledge on which meditation is based is produced by some texts while the knowledge leading to Mokṣa is produced by other texts; and that meditation which implies the plurality of meditator and meditation and meditated could not lead to the knowledge of texts affirming unity. Further, how could there be Jīvanmukti, when you define bondage as being united to a body and liberation as being free from a body ? If you say that the consciousness of the unreality of the body ends the embodied state, why do you talk of release while being joined to a body ? If you say that the appearance of union to a body, though sublated by realization, persists like the false appearance of a double moon in spite of knowing that there is only one moon, you can be met by the argument that when Avidyā goes embodied state due to it must go whereas the persistent appearance of two

moons is due to a defect of vision which mere knowledge cannot remove. The text तत्स तत्कर्त्तव्यं यावत्त विमोक्षये अथ सम्पत्तये (for him there is delay only as he is not freed from the body; then he will be in union) negatives Jīvanmukti. Therefore bondage can be removed only by means of the injunctions of meditation leading to a direct knowledge of Brahma. (तत्साद् ध्याननियोगेन ब्रह्मपरोक्षशानकलेनैव कर्मनिवृत्तिः). Your argument that if Mokṣa is caused by such a Vidhi (injunction) it would be non-eternal is wrong because what is caused is not release but the removal of what obstructs Mokṣa, and even that through the realization of Brahma. If you ask me how a Vidhi can generate knowledge, I ask you in reply how Niṣkāma Karma can generate knowledge ? If you say that it is through the purification of the mind, I also say so. If you say that in such a pure mind turned inwards by hearing and reflection and meditation the Śāstra produces that knowledge which destroys bondage, because the texts (ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति) say so, I say similarly that through the injunction to meditate the mind becomes pure and that such a pure mind gives rise to a knowledge of Brahma because the texts (श्रोतुभ्यो मन्त्रत्व्यो निरिष्यासितत्वः) etc., say so. Therefore, the Dhyāna-vidhi theorist affirms his theory.

Now comes up another critic (Bhāskara) who urges the Bhedābheda-vāda, though both Bheda and Abheda cannot co-exist. He says that we find that things are non-different in causal and generic aspects but different in their species as effects and as members of groups. If he is told that such a view will lead to the body and the soul standing in such a Bhedābheda relation, he will reply that the idea of the identity

of body and soul is sublated by the Pramāṇas relating to the soul and that in unsublated instances Bhedābheda-vāda applies. He urges that the relation of the soul to Brahma is the Bhedābheda relation because it is not absolutely different from Brahma and is a part (Āṁśa of Brahma). He says that its non-difference from Brahma is its essential state (स्वाभाविक) whereas its difference is due to its limiting adjuncts or Upādhis (Aupādhika). तत्त्वमसि अयमात्मा ब्रह्म etc., show the former aspect and शास्त्रै द्वारीश्चानीश्चै etc., show the latter aspect. The Upādhi consists of the mind and the senses and the body. Brahma has no parts and is omnipresent but it is divided by the Upādhis, just as ether is divided by objects, this division being due to Karma which is Anādi (beginningless).

But the Pūrvapakṣin refutes this Bhedābheda-vāda. Do you mean to say that the difference lies in one aspect of the thing and the non-difference in the other or that difference and non-difference belong to the same thing having two aspects ? If you mean the former, the difference belongs to the individual aspect and the non-difference to the generic aspect, in which case there are not two aspects of a single thing. If you mean the latter, then we have two aspects of a different kind and a third thing which is their Āśraya (basis or substrate), in which case they are different and not non-different. How can two aspects introduce as their basis two contradictory attributes like difference and non-difference ? Therefore the Jiva cannot stand to Prahma in the Bhedābheda relation. If your view is right, all the imperfections which spring

from contact with the Upādhis would belong to Brahma itself. Your view will be like a hearth fire which will burn up your whole house itself.

The Dhyāna-vidhi theory is thus answered by the Mīmāṁsaka. Even if the texts have a value as supplementary to the injunction to meditate, they cannot be viewed as a means of knowledge of Brahma. Meditation may be had even on the basis of imaginary facts, e. g., meditation on Name as Brahma.

The Pūrvapakṣin, after all these currents and cross-currents of argument finally lays down that as the texts do not aim at causing action or cessation of action, they do not serve any purpose; that even if they are supplementary to injunctions to meditate, they merely show the object of meditation; that hence the texts are no better than stories told to please children or sick persons; that the statements of the facts therein contain no guarantee of the truth of the facts, that thus the texts do not mean what they say; and that Śāstra (Scripture) is not a valid means of cognition of Brahma.

We now come to the Siddhānta. (True Doctrine). The Pūrvapakṣin's argument on this point is wrong. In the Sūtra सम्बन्ध means सम्बन्ध अन्वयः; i. e., पुरुषार्थस्यां अन्वयः (connection with Puruṣārtha or goal of man).

The fact that Brahma, who is infinite bliss and whose realization is therefore the supreme goal of man, is connected with the texts as revealed by them proves that scripture is a valid means for the cognition of Brahma. What if they do not aim at action or cessation of action ? The texts that teach all souls—that do not know the highest reality—

the nature of Brahma which the souls in a state of liberation can realize as non-different from themselves and which will give them infinite bliss are the texts most useful to such souls. Other texts state that the means of attaining such Brahma is meditation. The analogous cases of a person who learns about a treasure-trove and digs for it or of a king's son who runs away and does not know that he is the king's son and then learns that

fact and is reunited to his father show the significance of the texts.

The argument that the texts are no better than stories told to children or sick persons and contain no guarantee of the truth of the facts has no force. The stories would not please if they were known to be false. They please because they are believed to be true. The Upanishadic texts reveal to us the real existence of Brahma (God).

(Concluded)

Science and Society in India

A Plea for Reorientation of Education

BY KEWAL MOTWANI A. M., PH. D.

"It is not for me to remind you that India is in a transitional stage, and that she is on the threshold of a new era. With the march of years, there has come the inevitable impact of the West, and India today is engaged in the welding on to her old structures of the newer political and economic forms of the West, on the finding in her intellectual life a place for the discoveries of science with all their challenge to accepted modes of thought and practice... Even the most enthusiastic believer in the western civilization must feel today a certain despondency at the apparent failure of the West to dominate its scientific discoveries and to evolve a form of society in which material progress and spiritual freedom march comfortably together. Perhaps, the West will find in India's more general emphasis on simplicity and the ultimate spirituality of things a more positive example of the truths which the most advanced minds of the West are now discovering. Is it too much to hope that you, gentlemen, will be the channel through which India will make in an increasing degree that contribution to the Western and world thought which those of us who know and love India are confident that she can make in so full a degree?"—His Excellency, the Marquis of Linlithgow, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, in his opening address at the Silver Jubilee Session of the Indian Science Congress, held at Calcutta on January 3, 1938.

THE WEST

A proper appraisal of the impact of the Western culture on that of India demands a complete survey and scientific analysis of the objective and the subjective traits of the two cultures. The modern Western culture begins with the Industrial Revolution. Science and machine, its handmaids, have anni-

hilated space, knit the whole world into an organic whole and placed tremendous power at the disposal of man. But the general level of thought and the various social institutions of the West have not kept pace with the advancement of science and machine, and there are serious anachronisms, "cultural lags", which produce discord and decay.

This culture of machine and science has given to us, in the realm of economics, the prevalent ideology of pain amidst plenty, capitalism, large commercial combines and trusts, the laws of supply and demand and ever-accumulating profits, the gold-backed currency, tariffs and quotas, exchange depreciations, control and clearing arrangements, Imperial preferences, bilateral trade agreements, and autarchy or the self-sufficiency of nations.

In the realm of politics, it has given birth to arrogant aggressive, assertive nationalism and the false idea of state sovereignty. It has brought into being democracy and various forms of dictatorship, such as fascism, nazism, communism. Imperialism, based on ruthless exploitation of the backward races, is the twin-brother of nationalism. These and other apparently conflicting state systems, all offspring of machine and science, have this one feature in common: subordination of the individual to the state. They are all born of steel, smoke and blood, based on the mob-mind and suffer from the diseases of jobbery, lobbying, service of group interests, social conflict.

Science and machine have made of education an agency of propaganda. A sordid parochialism has invaded the educational institutions of the European countries while the arts and sciences are prostituted to serve group or state interests and feed national and racial prejudices of the masses. As Sir S. Radhakrishnan rightly remarks, "Many of the educational systems of the European continent are fixing the youth in attitudes of hatred, violence, blood-

lust and uncharitableness to all who are not of their race or political creed."* Intricate and invisible gadgets of science are utilized to convert thinking human beings into articulate animals, shouting slogans and shibboleths, with their mental integrity utterly dissolved, so that they are easily drilled to destroy or die. Education of little children is designed to make them fodder for cannon, while the leaders of thought are forced to buy their security by selling their conscience and by submitting themselves as bond slaves to the powers that be.

Religion has crumbled under the challenge of science and machine. Having fed the masses on the pabulum of original sin, on a meaningless sacerdotalism and pontifical encyclicals, it has, instead of strengthening, weakened man's grip on those values that could sustain him under all strain and invite him to a joyous partnership in creative work with his Maker. Rationalism, dialectical materialism and mechanistic behaviourism have come to be the fashions of the day.

The arts and entertainments have become commercialized and debased; a sordid sensualism has taken a grip of the masses living in the mechanized, urbanised West. Crime against person and property is on the increase everywhere. The glamorous and non-descript life of the cities, which are veritable jungles, is depersonalizing man, making him a "lost soul" even in the midst of crowds. The incidence of various dis-

* Radhakrishnan, Sir S., Convocation Address, Patna University, November 29, 1940, p. 4.

eases of body and mind is going up by leaps and bounds; everyone knows the dismal catalogue of both types of diseases so widely prevalent today.

This culture of machine and science has thrived on the philosophy of Darwinism, the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, law of the jungle. Today, the western world is a veritable bedlam, a holocaust of blood and flames.

INDIA

It is this culture of machine and science that India is in the process of assimilating. India, with her rural, agricultural and handicraft culture, with an integrated view of life, with her emphasis on indefinable, qualitative values, on individual uniqueness on Dharma, on self-imposed poverty, on social synthesis, on a subjective, broad-based nationalism, on man as well as the machinery of government, on a life of spiritual experience and unfoldment and on power through response, now stands face to face with a culture of machine and science, which is urban and industrial, based on an analytical view of life with its emphasis on neuroses and complexes, on mass production, on quantitative values, on mob uniformity, on rights and privileges, on accumulation of wealth, on social antithesis or conflict between various groups, on arrogant, assertive nationalism, on democracy and dictatorship, on religion of rationalism, scientific humanism and nihilism. India has sought the vision of the Whole, not of the parts. She has been interested in living, not merely in the means of livelihood. She has combined philosophic calm with vigorous action. She has stood for beauty and dignity, not mere

utility. But, today, the culture of machine and science has taken a firm grip of India and is slowly seeping into her soul.

The railway has destroyed the economic self-sufficiency of the village. The old system of barter and payment of wages in kind has given place to money economy. The village, which has been the basic unit of Indian civilization, is in ruins. There is unemployment, death and decay everywhere. Our cities thrive at the cost of the village. They centralize in themselves the financial, the educational, the industrial and the political functions as do the cities of the West. The machine has raised, in their midst, its mausoleums of coal, smoke, iron and steam, of dirt, squalor and over-crowding, of coolie-lines and human warehouses. The voluntary, spiritual type of economic communism, in which all the groups worked together for the welfare of the whole community, has disappeared, and India is now being broken up into two camps, capital and labour.

Our population is increasing by leaps and bounds, while our agriculture remains medieval and the arable land under cultivation is actually on the decline. The average weight, height and longevity of our people are going down. With the village life uprooted and the land-man ratio upset, the struggle for existence becomes keener, and we have reached the brutish level of living.

Our social life and organization are being constantly affected by science and machine. The mechanized entertainment, the radio, the race-course surround our young men and women in the cities,

and there is an insatiable craving for sensation. Our women know more of the cinema stars and their *affairs de amour* than of Sītā and Sāvitrī and their sufferings.

When we view India's political scene, the effects of the assault of the western culture assume alarming proportions. Democracy, a child of machine and science, has been transplanted in our midst with all its appalling futilities. We have developed party machines, ballot boxes, purchase of votes and mob psychology. The modern technique of propaganda is throwing up into the limelight a new type of leader who is very much like the political boss of the West. He is picking up the art of lobbying and jobbery. The central and the provincial capitals of India are busy hives of high-pressure groups wanting protection for their own interests. India, called to a synthesis of races, religions and cultures, is now being broken up by provincial jealousies that resemble the national hatreds of the European world. We talk of the Congress High Command, but the balkanization of India is the ghost that haunts us. Because of this provincialism, we sacrifice talent; a sordid nepotism has overtaken us. The philosophy of rights, aggressive and assertive, has come to stay with us, and we are immortalizing this legal fiction in our constitutions. Dharma, individual and social, has no place in our life today. Our future generations, drilled in these dogmas or rights and privileges, will rush at each other's throats, even as will these provinces fight with one another. The repetition of Europe's recent history, in a slightly different form, is not a remote possibility in India.

Religion has no place in our mechanical milieu. Money-making has come to be the *summum bonum* of our lives; people are all the time goaded on to success. The sources of disruption among the various communities, given a religious tinge, multiply at every point of their contact. Separation, Pakistan, Dravidstan, Sikhstan, Achuthstan, are all lineal descendants of provincialism. We are in the danger of accepting a materialistic philosophy of life.

Crime of all kinds is on the increase throughout India. Train and mail robberies, rape, kidnapping, traffic in women and children are becoming quite common. The Indian criminal emulates his prototype of the West whose exploits he sees in the movie. Hatchets and daggers are fast being replaced by guns and bombs, as stealthy thefts at night are eliminated in favour of armed robberies in broad daylight. Movies multiply by the dozen in the large cities; indeed, there is a demand for more. The travelling picture shows are invading our rural areas; the *rāsa līlā*, one of the most powerful mechanisms of diffusion of our cultural heritage, is being forgotten, and we produce and witness pictures based on western canons of ethics and aesthetics. India is under a strong cultural assault. She is forgetting very rapidly her link with the past national *sanskāras*. As Sir S. Radhakrishnan rightly remarks: "There are today disturbing signs of the gradual disintegration of our culture, which is the synthetic outcome of the contributions of the various races, religions and communities which have made India their home."*

* Opus cit. p. 13.

If India is to save her soul, if she is to "make in an increasing degree that contribution to the Western and world thought", which all those who know and love India rightly expect of her, she must plan her cultural synthesis intelligently and in strict conformity with her national ethos and present-day requirements.

PLANNING INDIA'S CULTURAL SYNTHESIS

This cultural synthesis is not something for a demagogue or a politician to orate about, for an academic wind-bag or an arm-chair philosopher to theorize over. It is a subject that demands scientific treatment and intelligent planning. Indeed, some of the best minds of the age are engaged in a task of this kind in America working unobtrusively in the educational institutions, with their vast country and its polyglot population of diverse nationalities and racial stocks as their laboratory, giving such guidance to their statesmen as the latter expect of them.*

If we, in India, want to undertake our task with a similar thoroughness, scientific procedure and in a spirit of dedication, we shall find that it is imperative for us to know intimately the prominent landmarks of the region that has to be surveyed. That region is the entire gamut of human life we call society. We shall realize that we have to have a clear grasp of those underlying

social processes that eventually have incarnated into those two culture patterns that we call the Western and the Indian. In order to do this, we shall have to begin with the study of the relationship between the organic and the inorganic environments and their relationship to, and effects on, man and his group life. Next will come the history of these culture regions, the ways of thinking and acting of people, their folkways and *mores*. We shall then have to close in and concentrate our attention on man, his original nature, his biological endowments, the human nature acquired through processes of interaction between him and the society, on the development of his social attitudes and ideas, on the processes of competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation into the social order, on the mechanisms of social control by means of which society controls the centrifugal tendencies of its members, on the collective behaviour of people, man in mass. The problem of population, in its quantitative and qualitative aspects, the standard of living, are significant aspects of social reality. The techniques of propaganda and the formation of public opinion will form other branches of study. Social mobility, both horizontal and vertical, that is, from one calling to another and along the sliding scale of social hierarchy will give us a clue to the dynamics of the social order. The major social institutions, such as education, marriage, family, economics, politics, religion, arts and sciences, their evolution and adaptation to the changing order, and the process of their maladjustment or crystallization, will give us an idea of the direction in which

* See the Report of the Commission on "Recent Social Trends in America," submitted by leading social scientists to President Herbert Hoover.

the social life of the people is moving. A vital part of study will be the two types of communities, the rural and the urban, their effects on man and the trend of civilization. Another important branch of study will be that of social change, evolutionary and sudden, the anatomy of revolution, the problem of social disorganization, the techniques of social repair and reconstruction. Finally, we shall have to face the problem of values and find out whether there is such a process as social progress, consciously willed, planned and executed, or whether human life must drift along like a derelict on an uncharted sea.

This, then, will be our approach to the problem of our national planning. It will thus be a synthesis of the environmental, the biological, the psychological, the statistical, the cultural, the ethical and the philosophical approaches to the social reality. Our fight will thus have to be fought on many fronts simultaneously.

The importance of the effects of science on society in the West has just begun to be appreciated by the votaries of the exact sciences. The International Council of Scientific Unions, with its headquarters at Delft, Holland, at its meeting in London in April, 1937, upon the recommendation of the Academy of Sciences of Amsterdam, established a Committee on Science and Social Relations, in terms of the following functions: "To consider the progress, interconnections and new directions of advance in the mechanical, chemical and biological sciences, especially in order to survey at suitable intervals, and to promote thought upon the develop-

ment of the scientific world picture and upon the social significance of the applications of science." Prof. F. J. M. Stratton, of Cambridge University, was elected as its President, and Professor Burger, of Delft, Holland, as its Secretary.

This action of the European scientists was followed by a similar resolution passed by the American Association for the Advancement of Science at its 1937 meeting along the following lines:

"Whereas, Science and its applications are not only transforming the physical and mental environment of men but are adding greatly to the complexities of the social, economic and political relations among men; and

"Whereas, Science is wholly independent of national boundaries and races and creeds and can flourish permanently only where there is peace and intellectual freedom;

"Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the Council on this thirtieth day of December, 1937, that the American Association for the Advancement of Science makes as one of its objectives an examination of the profound effects of science upon society; and that the Association extends to its prototype, the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and to all other scientific organizations with similar aims throughout the world, an invitation to co-operate, not only in advancing the interests of science, but also in promoting peace among nations and intellectual freedom in order that science may continue to advance and spread more abundantly its benefits to all mankind."

In our country, the Indian Science Congress, at its Madras session in January, 1940, passed a resolution, forming a Committee on Science and Social Relations and outlined the purpose of the Committee in the following terms: (a) Suggesting to the Executive Committee topics for joint discussions and lectures etc., relating to the influence of science on society in India; and (b) Formulating proposals for collecting data and taking necessary steps to put into effect such proposals under the authority of the Executive Committee relating to the effects of science on society in India and matters incidental thereto." This Committee on Science and Social Relations meets along with the Indian Science Congress and functions within the body of this organization.

But our task, as outlined above, is far greater than what a small Committee, meeting once a year, can undertake. I, therefore, strongly urge that we should have in our country a Federation or a National Academy of *Social Sciences*, comprising various learned societies, such as those of History, Anthropology, Political Science, Economics, Statistics, Psychology, Pedagogics, Philosophy, Sociology, Jurisprudence, etc., now functioning in isolation. One central organization should prove to be of great help in co-ordinating the activities of these various bodies, in pooling their resources of scholarship and in correlating their researches, so that while retaining their individuality and independence of action, they shall form parts of a larger whole, which will be dedicated to the task confronting our country: *the planning of a cultural*

synthesis in terms of our national ethos and present-day requirements. Efforts are being made to bring such an Academy into being.

Secondly, our educational reconstruction should be shaped in terms of the background that has been outlined above. Our Universities and the Educational Departments must give an integrated picture of the social life to the student, from the elementary class to the University stage. As Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru remarks: "On the cultural side...and I use the word 'culture' in its largest sense as being something more than mere book-lore...the Universities can be a focus and centre for the synthesis of different cultures and for evolution of that common culture which should be the highest aid of Indian Nationalism to achieve, if that phrase is not merely an empty phrase or a deceptive slogan."* A practical step in that direction will be the starting of Departments of Sociology in all the Universities, making Sociology a compulsory subject in the courses prescribed for Bachelor's degree in Arts, Science, Commerce, Agriculture, Engineering, Pedagogics, Medicine, Law, etc., and also for making provision for its higher study and research in the University courses. Quoting Sir S. Radhakrishnan again: "University men can check the spread of disintegrating tendencies which thwart India's cultural unity and political integrity."†

* Sapru. Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur, Convocation Address, Calcutta University, March 8th, 1941, p. 14.

† Opus cit. p. 14.

Thirdly, the Departments of Education in the various Provinces should give a social bias to the entire education, prepare text books in Indian languages and thus help the students to understand and master the environments that surround them and amidst which they will be called upon to live and act as citizens tomorrow.

India has a long road to travel and the sooner we begin, the better will it be for

our future generations. India's methods of social adjustment and reconstruction have a world-wide significance. Civilization is in the process of being reshaped on the anvil of the tragic present, and the whole world is looking to India for guidance. The world is vitally interested in seeing how India will adjust herself to this technological culture of the West, for, in India's success lies the salvation of the world. "If India lives, who dies? If India dies, who lives?"

The Temple in India: Its True Significance

By N. V. ESWAR

The temple in India is associated with idol worship. Many a foreigner and many others alienated by education and outlook have given themselves up to the above belief. It is unfortunate that they should have assumed placidity of mind and congratulated themselves on their wise judgment even before they delved deep to find out the true object the temple in India stands for. History is replete with such hasty judgments and conclusions. They are not only hasty but also one-sided and unjust. Before pronouncing any judgment, whether condemnatory or adulative, the whole subject should be thoroughly gone into. Nowhere is such a patience to be found. Indifference rather than curiosity plays its part in this judgment.

It is a generally recognized truth that we traverse from the known to the unknown. The known is only a means, it is only a guide for reaching the unknown destination. The means and guide cannot be our ultimate aim. This

is understandable and has been clearly perceived. The known is the base from which progress is to be made. Without a foundation nobody can build up. It is a rare feat. It is doubtful whether mankind will ever accomplish such a task. Further ventures and researches have, as a rule, to proceed from one known point. It is absolutely essential that we know where we stand before we can proceed to where we aspire to be. It is from this knowledge that we discover such means as will carry us forward. They are only means. They are not ends in themselves.

The spirit or the feeling of man is beyond expression. The spirit cannot be expressed in so many words. It expresses itself in many ways. These expressions of the spirit of man constitute art. We do not despise works of art. The idols are works of art. They are objects to fire people with inspiration, as there is no other way open to pour out the heart of man. Without a piece of

art, without a symbol the heart has conceived, man is devoid of inspiration. He is bereft of any ideals. His existence becomes lifeless, for there is no external agency to rouse up the latent creative energy of man.

India is no exception to humanity. Humanity derives inspiration from symbols. The abstract is made known through the aid of symbols. Even today we have not attained a stage when we can profitably and without injury to ourselves dispense with all symbolisms. Behind the symbol, only perceptible to the mind, lurks the ultimate idea, the ultimate destination. The goal is vaguely realized through the medium of the symbol. The use of symbols is universal. It is human. Within the precincts of the temple in India is no more fostered up idolatry than is done through the flags of the various nations. The flag is a convenient symbol to conjure up the vision of the nation. The nation is incapable of being expressed by word of mouth. It is an abstract entity. But the flag stands for it. To die for the flag does not mean to die for the piece of cloth of which it is made; it means dying for the nation. Even so is worship of God conducted through symbol not a worship offered to the symbol itself. Worship of God through idols is no more idolatrous than the worship of the nation through the medium of its various institutions and flag.

In a sense the temple in India is a place for worshipping the idol. The idol is nothing extraneous or foreign to the mind of man. It is not a thing outside creation. And if God in His immanent state permeates every single

particle of Matter in its minutest state, why should he be imagined to be absent in the idol? Matter can never exist except on the substratum of the Spirit. It is open to the Spirit to reveal itself wherever it listeth. All the paraphernalia that a temple abounds in are only the tools employed to chisel out the perfect idol. Something more than a superficial gloss is required to clearly understand what is implied by it. To this end meticulous care should be taken to truly appreciate the real function and object of the various activities followed in a temple. That today the temple does not influence our life as much as it did in the past, nobody will deny, but it does not lighten our responsibility for correctly estimating the part it played in the shaping of man in the past.

Apart from its spiritual aspect, let us see how the temple satisfies the need of society even from the most modern point of view.

With the growth of present scientific materialism the need for a sanitary life has been found to be of paramount importance. The danger of a whole population being wiped out is constant with us, if we show any relaxation in hygienic principles. How much care and attention did our ancients pay to the need of such a clean life can be presently seen.

Close to every temple there are clean large tanks for people to take their bath in. Annually all the dirt and impurities that collect at the bottom have to be removed. In the absence of any pumping system this recurring process is unavoidable. But this difficulty did not prevent the authorities concerned to carry out

this necessary piece of sanitary work. One may ask whether the presence of tanks around the temple will stimulate people to be clean in their habits. It is enjoined religiously that nobody should enter the temple for the purposes of worship without having washed himself in the temple tank. It may be surprising to some to learn that untouchability is not confined to mere outcastes. The Brahmana himself is an untouchable in the morning before he takes his bath. It is enough for a Brahmana to become an untouchable in the eye of the temple if he walks a distance of two miles! Before entering the house or the temple after using the public road one must wash himself. This clearly indicates that no foreign matter must be allowed to enter the house or the temple. This is extremely rigid and never relaxed in the case of the temple. In the case of the house washing of the feet, hands and face constitutes a substitute for a wash.

The temple in India draws to it people of the locality twice a day. Thus people have to wash themselves at least two times a day. People dwelling around the temple therefore will always be neat and clean. No exception is made with regard to garments; they must also be washed along with the owners.

If these simple sanitary principles had been propounded as merely essential to keep the human body clean, there were every chance of their being violated wholly or given the go-by at least temporarily, which carries the possibility of injuring public health. Religion had sent a deep and firm root into the minds of ancient Indians. They had no hesitation to conform to any impossible

precept laid down in the name of religion. Taking advantage of this mentality, the ancient life-planners of India made bathing religious. And the temple being the place where religious-minded persons would congregate, tanks were constructed around it in order that people may never fail to keep themselves clean. It is, therefore, clear that the temple in India plays an important role in building up a healthy society.

In almost every case the temple is self-sufficient. It is not safe for the temple always to rely on the general public to bring things for being consecrated to the presiding deity. On this realization the temple always keeps a small flower garden for itself. Near by it is reared another garden of fruit bearing trees. These fruits are daily made use of in the temple. Garlands of flowers are hung round the roof of the temple if flowers are plentiful. Flower is a necessity in a temple. There must be found flowers for Archanas (throwing petals of flowers reverentially on the deity with closed eyes, indicating deep meditation) at least twice a day. The use of flowers is not restricted to these Archanas alone. Flower garlands must on every account be hung from the roof of the sanctum sanctorum on either side of the deity. The petals of flowers that are offered to the deity in the form of Archana are taken from the deity and given to the general public as Prasāda (anything consecrated to the deity). The flowers are so scientifically chosen that every one of them is some sort of a disinfectant. Thus the whole atmosphere around the temple is made so pure that nobody in the vast congregation would breed in

his breast the fear of contracting any disease through inhaling foul air.

Besides, if one plucks flowers from the garden and makes them into garlands and offers them to the deity, it is declared, he would be working out more effectually his own salvation. The hope of the future is a great driving force with us. Every individual coming to the temple is impelled to pluck flowers from the temple garden and offer them to the deity. Being outdone by others in this many, dejected at heart, take to rearing up their own private gardens in which to grow flower and fruit plants as required by temple tradition. The desirability of having such gardens in every house is too well known to the modern world to need any recapitulation. Fruits form one of the best nutritious food to build up a healthy body. The flower garden, composed as it is of flowers of a disinfectant nature, lends itself considerably to purify the atmosphere around the house.

Whatever is offered to the deity at the temple should be shared by all. This is not a rule, but only tradition. Nobody must be refused the Prasada. He who refuses, falls low in the estimation of his religious neighbours. Further, he derives full value if only he shares with others. What is offered to the temple is distributed equally among the members of the community. This indirectly cements the individual relationship existing in the community. A community feeling based on love and care is thus generated. An Indian's life is bound up with that of the temple. Here he studies the first principles of equality. He is not taught this; he is made to live it. Every day,

both in the morning and evening, hemingles with various sorts of people in the temple to whom he offers what he has taken to the temple in exchange for what others have brought.

Women compete with one another in making garlands of flowers to be hung about the temple. These are taken back from the temple the next day as Prasāda and distributed among friends and relations. One need not covet another's garden, for she gets what she lacks in the form of Prasāda. To use the flowers that went to decorate the temple is the highest bliss. A strong living current of community feeling is thus made to flow through the veins of individuals by the unseen influence of the temple. It is not, therefore, any exaggeration to say that the temple helps greatly in building society on a firm foundation of love, care and equality. If there is care there is equality.

The temple's life is not restricted to the worship of idols, making garlands of flowers and consecration of food. It builds up regularity in the habits of men. In taking their meals the people follow their temple. The temple deity has fixed hours for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Nobody excepting small children is allowed to take anything in the interval. But nobody is allowed to take anything between the hours of five and seven in the evening. These hours are set apart for prayer at the temple. Fixed and regular habits are of paramount importance in life. These the temple breeds.

All the musical instruments that man has invented have a place in the temple. Professionals are engaged to

exhibit their skill everyday. Early in the morning at three the pipe is played on to rouse people up. Life begins to move once again in the village. Housewives go about their duties, and elder male members go to the temple to perform their religious duties. Completing their household duties women also go to the temple in the morning. But their number increases in the evening, for it is at night that all the musical instruments come out of their hiding places. It is then that the temple assumes the role of a music hall or a concert hall. For three hours people are treated to instrumental music.

Anybody is free to exhibit his talents. On festive occasions professional dramatists and dancers are invited to entertain the community. Artists busy themselves drawing the images of the local deity on the floor, with the help of powders got out of dry leaves, rice and chilli. The best talents are put to the severest tests. Their pecuniary gain is practically nothing. But the admiration of the community and the blessings of the elders are the only reward looked for. They are fed well and given presents of clothes, the prime necessities of life. No single form of art is neglected. The temple finds use for every art or profession. It lends a helping hand to every form of self-expression. Payment in money being almost negligible, the temple attracts any person who has something to show the community. The absence of money creates voluntary labour and free service rendered gladly in the interest of the community.

The temple is not a mere building of stone and wood. No single piece of stone

or wood is left uncarved. The artist's finger is visible everywhere. Visual education has been today recognized as the only true education. The ancient Indians with far greater insight into human nature had recognized this to advantage. The whole temple is carved with legends and history. One can see before him vividly the past as it was. The record of the past is preserved on pieces of stone and wood. It is the past that gives us hope, and drives us forward. For this it is essential that we be in intimate contact with the past. No amount of book learning will present before us an undistorted and clear vision of the past. In the temple premises the past is made to live on stones and wood. They are perpetually before us. We are made to live in the past. By this alone can the lapses of the present be realized.

The carvings do not represent mere legends. They depict the eternal conflict between good and evil. They serve as an eye-opener to the generations to come and teach them how to conduct themselves in life so that they may lead a peaceful existence. The whole temple is the book of life laid open before the mental and physical eye of man. Their value to man is inestimable. It is only by contrasting the present with the past that the foundations of a future perfect life can be laid down firmly. The carvings in the temple act as an incentive to turn the feet of man in the right direction. The temple is an Art Museum that instills inspiration and life into the drooping minds of men.

Written records of the past called Sthala Purāṇas are preserved in the temple. They transcend the limits of

their close preserves and live in the minds of the people of the locality themselves. The temple has imbued every individual with a certain amount of historical knowledge of the past, but they may not possess the precision of the modern historian, for they study history through word of mouth. Still anybody possessed of a critical historical knowledge can reach the Sthala Purāpas preserved in the archives of the temple. Historians may enrich the work done in the past. The temple offers ample facilities to the budding historian.

In a temple will be installed three to four deities. Apart from imparting the greatest and noblest knowledge of unity in variety, this serves to drive out the beast in man. Each individual deity has a pet animal or bird as its Vāhana. It is believed that the deities do their travellings on the back of these pet Vāhanas. So that all these animals and birds are invested with sacredness. To hurt any of them is sinful. If one is instrumental in letting fall one single hair from the back of these dumb fellow creatures of man, he is doomed. The only palliative is to make a present to the deity of the animal or bird that fell a victim to the beast in man. In other words, man has to behave towards these birds and animals in the same way as he would towards his loving relatives. Besides, he has to be completely non-violent. Man's violence easily flares up towards animals and birds. This is

nipped in the bud. In the final analysis there will be left no animal or bird that is not sacred to one deity or other. The temple compels man by practice to live in complete harmony with every living creature on earth. From early childhood man is brought up in the nursery of love. The temple is such a nursery where universal love is made inherent in man by constant practice. His duty does not end in completely abjuring violence towards animals and birds. He is by tradition forced to feed them. To look after the pets of deities is one of the many Paths through which man can attain freedom or perfection. This idea the temple successfully imprints on the mind of man. The temple makes man feel his complete identity with every living creature found on earth.

The temple thus plays an important part in the shaping of human society. To call it simply a place of idol worship betrays poor knowledge persisting in its refusal to acknowledge facts. The temple in India is a place where humanity is shaped on healthy lines. The revival of the Temple system on proper lines throughout India, shorn of the wasteful accretions of centuries, would mean an all-round resuscitation of Indian spirituality and Indian culture, which would automatically give an upward pull to Indian talent in all its branches, and establish before the world a true picture of civilized society as envisaged by the ancient seers and philosophers of India.



Unto Bliss

Why are you wasting this invaluable human existence like a blind man stumbling against obstructions here and there; why suffer from restlessness day and night persecuted by your sorrows? All the eight watches of the day and night you sigh for happiness; whether asleep or awake, all the while you go on fluttering in your error, but have you discovered happiness anywhere? Taking to be the source of happiness, whatever you seek to clasp to your bosom scorches you with the heat of sorrow. Wherever you may imagine happiness to lie, you strike against the rock of sorrow and get yourself bruised and your bones broken. In honour, fame, prosperity, authority over men, wife or husband, and children—have you discovered happiness anywhere? In none of these you have found it. Everywhere you experience nothing but sorrow and suffering, nothing but fear and worry. Will happiness be found, then, if you retire altogether from association with these?

But where will you retire? Wherever you go, you will meet with the same experience. Therefore it is not necessary to retire. What is necessary is to realize the truth that supreme happiness lies only in God, and that God is everywhere,

every moment and in every respect complete by Himself. When you will realize this truth, you will begin to see God in every place, in every moment of time and in every circumstance, whether favourable or unfavourable. Then alone you will realize true happiness, by finding God all around you, and in every moment of your life.

The reason why you are getting so helplessly scorched and burnt by the world's heat,—why everywhere you see nothing but the naked dance of destitution, fear, sorrow and destruction,—is that you see the world as void of God. Wherever God is imagined to be non-existent, it is there that destitution, fear, sorrow and destruction come marching along with all their terrible troops and establish their camp. You cannot get out of the ring of these enemies, unless knowing God to be everywhere present, complete by Himself, you actually realize Him.

God is everywhere present, therefore, He is your eternal companion. Observing Him, make yourself happy and contented for all time. You can do this. Being the very embodiment of Truth, you possess in full the right to realize Truth. Truth is, in fact, your very Self.

—Siva.

A Prayer

Water the hidden roots
Of my soul, O God,
From Thy Eternal Springs
Of Love Divine,
That I may ever tender be
To Thee and Thine;
Ever responsive
To Thy faintest breath,
Ever obedient
To Thy great command
To Love and Love,
With heart and voice and hand.

—*Herald of Good Will.*

Importance of the Sraddha Ceremony

By SWAMI SIVANANDA

The Karma-Kāṇḍa of the Vedas, the sacred books of the Hindus, has laid down different duties of man according to his position in life and the order to which he belongs. All these injunctions are embodied in the book called *Manusmṛti*. *Manusmṛti* is the code of law which lays down the right course of conduct for every Hindu. Kings and rulers of the past were guided by the rules contained therein for the maintenance of peace and order in the country. The *Manusmṛti* has divided human society into four main divisions known as Brahmana, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra. It has also made four divisions of the stages of life through which an individual has to pass viz., Brahmacharya, Gṛhasthya, Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa. The period of Brahmacharya is covered by the life of a student, Gṛhasthya is household life, Vānaprastha the life in the forest given to religious pursuits and lastly Sannyāsa, the life of a mendicant after renouncing all worldly activities. These are the four Āśramas of life.

This order of society gradually perished due to force of circumstances caused by the impact of modern civilization and the deterioration of spiritual life in man. Materialistic forces of Rajas and Tamas have overpowered the Sattvic forces and religion has been relegated to a position of secondary importance. Nay, religionists are being looked upon with contempt in these days. A devotee or a Sādhaka with a tuft of hair on his head is not

liked by the modern man. Study of scriptures, observances of religious rites, a spiritual life of moderation and real ethical culture are denounced as useless or old-fashioned and consequently they are fading into insignificance. The problem of life has become very serious now. The struggle for existence is very keen. The question of food and provision for other luxuries of life have usurped the place of religion.

For a householder the scriptures have imposed the Pañcha Mahā Yajña, the five great sacrifices as obligatory duties of life. The neglect of these duties entails penalty. These great sacrifices are:—(1) Deva Yajña (sacrifice to gods), (2) Rṣi Yajña (sacrifice to Rṣis), (3) Pitṛ Yajña (sacrifice to the manes or ancestors), (4) Bhūta Yajña (sacrifice to animals) and (5) Atithi Yajña (sacrifice to guests).

The Śraddha ceremony comes under Pitṛ Yajña. Its performance is a sacred duty of the householder. Every householder should perform the Śraddha ceremony of his ancestors. Pitṛs are forefathers who dwell in the Pitṛloka. They possess the powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience. When Mantras are recited, a tremendous influence is created through their vibration. The Pitṛs hear the sounds through the power of clairaudience and they are pleased. They bless those who offer the oblation. The essence of food offerings made during Śraddha is taken up by the sun's rays to Sūryaloka and the departed souls are

pleased with the offerings. Even in Germany and other foreign countries many persons perform Tarpaṇa and Śrāddha. They have scientifically investigated the beneficial effects of such oblations. It is the imperative duty of all householders to perform Śrāddha and Tarpaṇa to please the R̥ṣis and Pitṛs. The *Gitā* and the Upaniṣads clearly bear testimony to the fact that the performance of Śrāddha is very, very important. It is only the deluded souls with perverted intellect who misconstrue things and neglect to perform the sacred ceremonies and consequently suffer. They are misguided by false reasoning and logic. Ignorance is the root cause of this state of affairs.

The Śrāddha ceremony is performed once every year. A day of the Pitṛs is equal to one year of human computation. That is the reason why we have to perform Śrāddha once a year. Śrāddha performed once a year, is equivalent to daily performance of Śrāddha according to the Pitṛs. In their calculation we, their sons, live only for a few days, because the longest period of human existence of 100 years is merely 100 days for them.

Some people entertain the doubt, that when the Jīva undergoes transmigration and takes another birth after leaving this physical body, how do the offerings of Śrāddha reach him? He is no more in the heavens. Whom do the oblations reach? In the ninth chapter of the *Gitā* Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has made it very clear that those virtuous persons who perform sacrifices for attainment of heaven attain to those worlds of enjoyments. "They, having enjoyed that spacious world of Swargas, their

merit (Puṇya) exhausted, enter the world of the mortals; thus following the Dharma of the triad, desiring objects of desires, they attain to the state of going and returning." This establishes the theory of attainment of heaven after death, and rebirth in the mortal world after the exhaustion of the effects of virtue. The enjoyments in heaven and peace of the soul is enhanced by the performance of the Śrāddha ceremony. The sufferings in worlds other than heaven according to the merits of one's own actions is mitigated by the performance of the Śrāddha ceremony by his sons and descendants. So in both cases the performance of Śrāddha is a great help. The Pitṛs remain in heaven (Pitṛloka, Chandraloka) for a very long period.

Even if the individual takes another birth immediately after his death, according to the theory of transmigration, the performance of Śrāddha adds to his happiness in his new birth. So it is the imperative duty of everybody to perform the Śrāddha ceremony for his parents and forefathers. The Śrāddha ceremony should be performed with great Śraddha (faith) as long as you live. Faith is the main support of religion. In olden days the question whether Śrāddha should be performed or not did not arise at all. The people were full of faith and had reverence for the scriptures. In these days when faith is almost dwindling into an airy nothing, when the list of non-performers of Śrāddha is daily on the increase, others of wavering faith, began to doubt whether it is at all necessary to perform the ceremony, whether any good really accrues from it. Lack of faith in the Śāstras has degraded us to the present deplorable condition. "अस्त्रावृ-

जरे शानम्”—the man of faith attains knowledge and thereby immortality and eternal peace, is the declaration of the *Gītā*.

Some people argue that if a man once performs the Śrāddha ceremony of his forefathers at Gaya and other places of religious importance, they need not do it every year thereafter. But this is not a general rule and does not apply to all. It applies only to certain exceptional cases. If people take shelter under this exception and discontinue the Śrāddha ceremony by once offering Piṇḍa etc., at Gaya, they do so out of sheer ignorance.

The various religious observances imposed upon mankind by the Śāstras are intended to purify the ignorant man. The goal of Karmayoga is purification of the mind. The Śrāddha ceremony being one of the obligatory duties according to the injunctions of the scriptures also tends to purify the mind. Besides this the forefathers are also pleased and their good wishes and blessings contribute to our material and spiritual growth.

People who die without a son suffer in the other worlds. (This is, of course, not applicable in the case of Nitya Brahmachāris and spiritual aspirants who tread the spiritual path after renouncing all selfish desires and worldly enterprises.) That is the reason why people adopt a son before their death so that the Śrāddha ceremonies after their death may be duly performed. The *Gītā* also supports this view when it says—“पत्नि पितरो ष्ठेण लुप्तिष्ठोदकियाः”—their forefathers fall (down to hell) deprived of the offerings of Piṇḍa (rice-ball) and water.”

But if a man is religious-minded, if he has discrimination and dispassion, belief in the Śāstras and the Vedas, if he has led a virtuous life till the end of life, if he has devoted his last days to devotional practices, to Japa, meditation, study of the scriptures, etc., he will not suffer a fall even if he has no son. He will surely enjoy perfect peace. He will not be affected by the dark forces of ignorance. He will be free from the base attractions of the world. The Lord will take care of his spiritual progress. Having developed self-surrender, there is no fear of a downfall in his case. He will naturally attain mental purity. All religious observances have Chitta Śuddhi (purification of the mind) as their goal. This he attains by virtue of his past Samskāras and virtuous life in the present incarnation.

People of some communities in India spend money enormously and indiscriminately on Śrāddha ceremony for show. This is mere waste. Money should not be spent on luxury. It is a delusion to think that the manes will get more peace if more money is spent over the Śrāddha ceremony. Money does not count for the peace of the Pitṛs but it is the intensity of Bhāva or sentiment with which the Śrāddha is performed.

On such occasions the poor and deserving persons should be fed sumptuously. Their necessities of life should be attended to. Study of the scriptures should be done on such days. The performer of the Śrāddha ceremony should observe spiritual disciplines like Japa, meditation, silence, etc. He should maintain strict Brahmacharya. He should not spend his time in idle pursuits. He should pray to God the whole day.

Recitation of appropriate Vedic hymns should be done. The story of Nachiketā of the Upaniṣads should be studied. The performer of Śraddha who follows this line of practice will attain Immortality.

Revive the Vedic religion. Tread the path of Truth. Perform the Śraddha ceremony. Shake off this slothfulness and indifference to the path of righteousness. Awake, arise! Tap the right source. Stick to your Varṇaśrama Dharma. There is no greater sacrifice than performance of one's own duty. Study the *Gītā* daily. Live in the world,

but be out of it. Assimilate the teachings of the *Gītā*. This is the surest way to success in life as well as in God-realization.

May you enjoy the bliss of the eternal! May you attain the Immortal and imperishable seat of Brahma by regular performance of your Swadharma (duty), by singing Śrī Hari's names, by serving the sick and the poor, by following the path of righteousness, by regular study of the Vedas and meditation on the Supreme Self! May the Lord guide you in all your activities!

Letters to Fellow-Seekers

I

THE SĀNKHYA AND KARMAYOGA OF *Gītā*

With regard to the fourth and fifth verses of the fifth chapter of the *Gītā* you have written to say that you are in complete agreement with the idea conveyed by these verses but not with the words, and that even the words of the *Gītā* ought to have been 'unobjectionable.' I can only say in reply that if you find the words in the original 'objectionable,' the idea conveyed by them to you loses all its value. But the consensus of opinion of scholars and of those who have gone deep into the teaching of the *Gītā* is that there is no word in the *Gītā* which may in any sense be regarded as objectionable.

The teaching of the *Gītā* aims mainly at realization of God. The Yoga of Knowledge (Sankhya, Sannyāsa) and the Yoga of Action are its two main divisions. The Yoga of Knowledge is intended for Sankhyayogis, or followers

of the path of Knowledge, and the Yoga of Action for Karmayogis, or followers of the path of Action (*Gītā* III. 3). Both aim at the same thing, viz., realization of God. In the fourth verse, the Lord says: "That Sankhya and Yoga are two different things is declared by children (the ignorant), and not by the wise. A man poised in either of the two, gets the fruit of both." Then, in the fifth verse, He says: "The very state which is gained by the Sankhyas (through the Yoga of Sankhya), is reached by the Karmayogis (through the Yoga of Action). (In reality, therefore,) He sees, who sees Sankhya and Yoga as one." This is what it literally means, and the idea must necessarily conform with the words. A little consideration will make it obvious that the Lord does not mean to say that the two poises are one. He means simply that they are one in their result. As disciplines they are different. They may be rightly called one in the sense of their fruit.

As to the meaning of the two Yogas, there is some difference of opinion. As for myself, I think neither Sāṅkhyayoga of the *Gītā* means a complete renunciation of action, nor Karmayoga means simply carrying out of programmes for public welfare. Even prosecution of a war may form part of Karmayoga.

Sāṅkhyayoga means the renunciation of the ego-sense of the doer in all actions of the mind, speech and body as also renunciation of all egoistic attachment to the body and the world. All action proceeds from a play of the three modes of nature upon one another. Karmayoga means the performance of duty as an offering to God without any desire for its fruit and without any attachment. Sacrifices, gifts, austerities, readings and recitations, patriotic, religious and social service, protection of the family, maintenance of the body and of the household, can all be turned into Karmayoga if they are done without desire for fruit and without attachment. All these actions can, similarly, be regarded as inactions (as actions renounced) when they are done without the ego-sense of the doer. Sāṅkhya is the means to a non-dualistic realization, Karma-yoga the means to a dualistic realization. Both aim at, and bring about, one and the same thing—realization of God. A follower of Karmayoga is necessarily a worker and does works. But the followers of Sāṅkhyayoga also are not precluded from doing works, as is evident from the eighth and the ninth verses of the fifth chapter. "It is the senses which are acting upon their objects, I am myself doing nothing." The ego-sense of the doer being thus eliminated, the follower of the Sāṅkhyayoga sees, hears, touches,

smells, eats, comes, goes, takes, gives, does and can do everything. It cannot be said, therefore, that the ideal of the follower of Sāṅkhyayoga is selfish while that of the follower of Karmavoga is selfless. Both aim at the same thing. The difference lies in the mental attitude and therefore of self-application. If we look at the difficulties, they are, indeed, greater in the case of the Sāṅkhyayogi. "It is painful", says the Lord, "for those who devote their mind to the unmanifest." The way is full of difficulties. Both are directed to self-progress, which means purification of the mind. When the mind is purified, all mental and physical actions proceed from a high motive, a lofty ideal and quite naturally lead to welfare of the people. It must be remembered that evil and adversity are caused by men of unpurified minds. Without purification of the mind none can proceed on either of the two paths. Neither of them is therefore superior nor inferior to the other. The superiority lies only from the point of convenience, one being a difficult way and the other easier. And in that sense alone, the Lord says: "The Yoga of renunciation of works and the Yoga of Action both lead to liberation. But of them the Yoga of Action is better than the renunciation of works."*

It is a wrong idea to hold that he who does works for the good of the people is necessarily a Karmayogi. He who has risen above his own selfish interests and is working for the good of the people is, indeed, a great man, but if he desires only the objective happiness of the people

* सन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःप्रेयसकरात्पुमौ ।
तपोस्तु कर्मसन्यासात्प्रमयोगो विशिष्यते ॥

(*Gītā* V. 2.)

he is not a Karmayogi according to the *Gitā*. It has, however, become a fashion of the day to call every worker, who contributes to some material good of the people, a Karmayogi. But the Divine Teacher says in the *Gitā*: "Regard victory and defeat, gain and loss, happiness and grief with an equal eye and fight" (II. 38); "the man of a fixed will and intelligence is he who neither joys nor grieves to accept anything, like or dislike, that comes to him" (V. 20); "fight, reposing all your actions with a spiritual mind in Me, free from all egoistic sense and vexation" (III. 30); "all enjoyments born of contact with the sense-objects are the roots of grief (which produce griefs) and are transient. No wise man indulges in them" (V. 22). This is the ideal set before us by the *Gitā*, to which the life devoted to acquiring wealth, fame and doing of works full of attachment, without any idea of God-realization, stands obviously in great contrast? A man attached to, and desirous of, things which are roots of grief, even though the things may be intended not for oneself but collectively for society, has no right to be called a Karmayogi of the *Gitā*. To call him as such is a travesty of Karmayoga. The following passage reveals the real character of Karmayoga:

योगसः कुरु कर्मणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्धयोः सप्ते भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्चरेऽ ॥

"Abandoning all attachment and becoming equal to success and failure and living in Yoga (with your mind in union with God) do your duties. Equanimity of mind itself is called Yoga."

The Karmayogi, according to the *Gitā*, can work also for such things as wealth and honour; but even there he

aims at realization of God. His whole object of seeking is God and not Yoga; and therefore the Divine Teacher says:

निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यत्वं विगतज्ञवः ।

"Without desire, without any egoistic sense of possession, and cured of all mental fever, fight."

Similarly, the Sannyāsi of the *Gitā* is not only a renouncer of works. He, too, is delightfully engaged in doing good to all beings, सर्वभूताहिते रतः. He, too, aims at realization of God. Supposing, for a moment, that the Sannyāsi of the *Gitā* is one, who, having renounced all works, is doing some Sādhana in seclusion, are we justified in saying that he is a selfish man? The whole world is pervaded by God, it exists in, and proceeds from, God. Is not he who seeks by his Sādhana to propitiate God, is thereby seeking, in another way, to propitiate Him in the world as well? He who abandons all attachment and repulsion and follows his Sādhana in retirement is, indeed, a great man who by his noble thoughts and high uplifting ideas and by his very presence gives to the world a gift which is really priceless. Sannyāsīs of this type are rare to meet nowadays, but that is no reason why the idea itself should be tabooed. Even genuine Karmayogīs, according to the *Gitā*, are not very plentiful. And those who are genuine among them have no reason to come forward and prove their genuineness to us. They need no certificate from the world. I humbly state a fact when I say that the Mahātmās living in retirement, by their very presence quite naturally do everlasting good to the world. They give us something which is substantial. In that sense also we can safely say that the

Karmayogī and the Sankhyayogī are one, although it does not at all appear to be the trend of the *Gitā*'s meaning in the passages alluded to.

The letter has become sufficiently long. Before I close, I humbly submit that I have no deep insight into the teachings of the *Gitā*. I cannot even say that I am a devoted student of the *Gitā*. I should not, therefore, be misunderstood to have in any way claimed that whatever I have written is just the truth. By way of replying to your letter I have put down things which came to my mind, but which may not be quite relevant. I hope you will excuse me for these failings out of your loving heart.

II

THE DIVINE WILL IS ALWAYS FULL OF BLESSINGS

Whatever be the will of God, it is always beneficent. The Divine will can never be harmful. Action and reaction will go on in the world as a matter of course.

Devote yourself to Bhajana with a devoted heart. Worldly activities should be carried on as a matter of duty according to the inspiration of God within. Then whatever happens, one should feel contented with it. For the result was determined before.

III

HOW TO GET OVER DIFFICULTIES

Whatever be the circumstances we are placed in by God, we should gratefully accept them and live them out with courage and contentment. To feel disturbed by a difficulty is to increase it all the more. A difficulty is overcome

by one's becoming indifferent to it and persevering, fully confident of Divine grace. Seeing the future as dark and hopeless means lack of faith in God. Please keep yourself always cheerful armed with complete faith in the grace of God.

IV

FAITH IN DIVINE GRACE

Tell.....not to lose his spirit. Loss of spirit when faced with difficulty means lack of faith in God's beneficence. The Lord is the very embodiment of auspiciousness. Whatever He does is for our highest good. The fact is, we do not seek His grace nor accept from the heart the order of things ordained by Him, which is always and wholly good for us (even though, at times, it may appear bitter even as a bitter medicine). We want what appears to us best, according to our judgment, but which on various occasions may lead to our evil.

We seek only that much of Divine Grace which appears to us favourable, that is how we deprive ourselves of the full play of Grace on us. Not only..... but all of us suffer from this defect. That is why we have to go through so much of suffering. It is our error which creates this suffering for us. He should take to the practice of the Divine Name with full faith in God, and fully confident of Divine Grace, should leave himself entirely to God's care.

If he cannot do this, let him at least do the Japa of the Divine Name. Whatever the motive with which the Japa is performed, it will do him good; he will realize Grace at least partially, and his worldly desires also will be satisfied to

a certain extent. But through the satisfaction of worldly desires he will be a loser in the sense that attainment of Divine Love will be delayed.

Tell.....to increase the Japa of the Divine Name as much as he can. If he is disturbed in his Japa due to unsteadiness of the mind, let him not feel troubled or perplexed. He should have faith and should try regularly to increase the number of Japa.

V

REALIZATION OF THE OBJECT OF LIFE

Lust, anger, greed, bewilderment and error, etc., all these are eradicated from one's nature when through Divine Grace he develops complete faith in God. Before that, they will persist in some form or other. Please go on with your practice of Japa of the Divine Name in any way you can. The power of the Name will increase your faith in God. Please feel neither dispirited nor defeated. He who seeks refuge in God never stops till he

has brought about a complete annihilation of these evils. The one force which can destroy them is faith in God, which comes from Bhajana, or constant practice of the Divine Name.

I am really an insignificant creature. Be sure that God is a selfless friend of us all. He is omniscient, He knows every detail of what we are. Over and above this, He is omnipotent. Place your trust in Him. That trust will bring you highest happiness, real joy and eternal peace. You are right in holding that by the force of your own Sādhana, you will gain nothing. Do not depend on the force or strength of your Sādhana. Depend on the Grace of God. Does a small child depend on any other support than the mother? And God, as our Divine Mother, is ever ready with stretched arms to lift us into Her bosom. Not we, but She stands waiting with her eager eyes fixed on us. Get into Her arms and sit on Her lap. Therein lies the realization of the object of life.

"That which ye sow, ye reap; see yonder fields—
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
Was corn; the silence and the darkness knew;
So is a man's fate born.
He cometh reaper of the things he sowed."

"The man who sows wrong thoughts and deeds, and prays that God will bless him, is in the position of a farmer who, having sown tares, asks God to bring forth for him a harvest of wheat."

—James Allen.



The Kalyana-Kalpataru



Sri Sita-Rāma

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANARAJA KALDARSHAKU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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विश्वोद्भवस्थितिलयादिषु हेतुमेकं
मायात्रयं विगतमायमचिन्त्यमूर्तिम् ।
आनन्दसान्द्रममलं निजबोधरूपं
सीतापतिं विदिततच्चमहं नमामि ॥

(*Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* I. i. 2)

Obeisance to that Knower of Reality, the Lord of Śrī Sītā,
who is the one cause of the origin, preservation and dissolution of
the Universe, who, though Himself the resting-place of Māyā, is
beyond Māyā, whose Form is incomprehensible, the very embodiment
of Bliss, free from the taints of attributes and self-egregious.

Spirituality, Religion and Materialism

BY RAI BAHADUR MADAN MOHAN VARMA, M.A.

The words 'Spirituality' and 'Materialism' are frequently used in common parlance. Yet there is so much confusion in the minds of many of us about the meaning and nature of Spirituality and Materialism, that often enough what some of us call Spirituality and Materialism are not Spirituality and Materialism, but are entitled to be called pseudo-spirituality and pseudo-materialism. It is therefore well worth making an attempt to clarify our conceptions.

Some honest materialists blame the spiritual seekers for separating themselves from all work for the welfare of the world, and depriving their own lives of essential amenities which, to them, make life worth living. What good to the world or even to himself is the man, they contend, who retires into the forest, and, practising asceticism, gives his own body no pleasures which life offers us? And what of the toll which, in the name of religion, the priest class take from those who toil and sweat, giving no return? Are they not social parasites? The poverty and indolence of India, too, is due to her spiritual chase. Thus argue they.

The spiritualist, on the other hand, looks with scorn on the man who 'eats, drinks and makes merry' and has no other aim in life except selfish self-indulgence and self-aggrandizement. He calls him materialist.

Now, it is easy to give the dog a bad name and hang him! But an honest seeker after Truth must sift the wheat

from the chaff, and not judge spirituality by pseudo-spirituality or materialism by pseudo-materialism.

Materialism, according to Dictionary, is the doctrine that denies the independent existence of spirit, and maintains that there is but one substance *viz.*, matter—thus professing to find in matter or in material entities or in material qualities and forces, the sole explanation of all life and existence whatsoever. The doctrine of Spirituality, according to the same Dictionary, is that nothing is real but soul or spirit: that spirit has a real existence apart from matter, or even the only real and eternal existence.

Materialism has produced unselfish human servants like Charles Bradlaugh. Spirituality has produced saviours of mankind like Buddha, Christ, Mohammad and many adepts, Yogis and Bhaktas who mark the high water-mark of humanity. Let us, therefore, study honest Materialism and honest Spirituality; and not the selfish and self-centred man who seeks protection under the cover of Materialism or one who swears by Spirituality but falls short even of the Materialist ideal of life.

The man who 'eats, drinks and makes merry' may be one whose doctrine is spiritual, but who falls short of his faith on account of the 'weakness of the flesh'. He does not necessarily *deny* God; he 'crowds out' God, which is quite a different matter. On the other hand, a person may be a model of altruism and

moral behaviour, like Charles Bradlaugh, and yet be a Materialist by doctrine, and not a Spiritualist.

Materialism is obviously limited. The premises of the Materialist are his material environment, and he refuses to believe, even to suppose, what he cannot verify by his senses or intellect. His morality is a limited code of social behaviour leading to the greatest good, in respect of the worldly necessities and amenities, of the greatest number of men. But a good materialist need not be a selfish, self-indulgent and self-aggrandizing creature. His outer life may seem to be almost as good as that of a spiritualist. His inner peace must inevitably be limited, for matter or material entities or material qualities and forms are ephemeral and present a certain wall which cannot be pierced. And man 'lives not by bread alone'. The materialist, however, knows, or at least believes he knows, what he is and what he is after.

The spiritual seeker is not satisfied with the premises of his changing material environment being the sole reality, or even *real* so far as it goes; for the real, according to him, should not be transitory. He generally comes to believe in a sort of a *sixth* sense which has to be awakened to understand Reality. The vision or comprehension of that Reality—and not material comforts and amenities—is his goal of life. He may call it, according to his angle of vision and mode of approach, Truth, Reality, God or by any other name. Material comforts and amenities may fall to his lot in some measure, or may not; they are not outside God's universe, but they

are not his goal. Perhaps he has had his share of them in the past, and they now fail to attract him, and perhaps they attract him, but, being transitory and fickle, fail to satisfy him.

The goal of both the spiritual seeker and the materialist is happiness.

Scientists have discovered many facts and Laws of the material world, and we take them on trust in so far as our senses and intellect accept them. Spiritual adepts have similarly given humanity their experiences of the spiritual, and proclaimed certain laws of spiritual unfoldment, and most men draw on them, at least as hypothesis, in so far as their reason and intuition urge or allow them to do so.

II

Annie Besant, a profound student of the different religions of the world, summarized the main spiritual verities of religion as follows:—

- (i) One eternal infinite incognizable real Existence.
- (ii) From T H A T the manifested God, unfolding from unity to duality, from duality to trinity.
- (iii) From the manifested Trinity, many spiritual Intelligences, guiding the cosmic order.
- (iv) Man a reflection of the manifested God and therefore a trinity fundamentally, his inner and real Self being eternal, one with the Self of the Universe.
- (v) Man's evolution by repeated incarnations, into which he is drawn by desire, and from which he is set free by know-

ledge and sacrifice, becoming divine in potency as he had ever been divine in latency.

In regard to Man, in the *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad* the self is described as conditioned by the physical body, the subtle body and the mental body, and then rising out of all into the One "without duality".

From desire to sacrifice and knowledge spreads the vista of human evolution into the realms of the spirit. In the first stage, man progresses by desire. Swirled by desire, he brings out some power, develops some faculty. "Every pain I suffered in one body, was a power I wielded in the next" (Edward Carpenter). To cease effort would mean stagnation. So, even a man of the world who is after, say, money; develops certain qualities—qualities of conquest of body through frugality, enduring hardship for his object, concentration of mind, strength of will, etc. This is the *Pravṛtti-Mārga*—the path of pursuit.

But a time comes when man cannot multiply possessions, when wealth becomes a burden, when satiated with possessions, he turns away from them and tends to get rid of selfishness, catches a glimpse of the hidden mystery of life. This marks the beginning of *Nivṛtti-Mārga*. He then learns to perform his allotted task as *Duty*, doing his business just the same but carrying a new spirit into it—for the larger Self instead of for the smaller self. Thus he slowly learns to go a step further and do all work as sacrifice, even to the pattern of the primary mystic sacrifice of God sheathing a part of Himself in matter. Thus, truly he comes to know consciously that

man is made in the image of God. But before that glorious consummation comes, he has to set his life at work to carve out his own life into the image of the Divine manifestation in man. Even as in a studio, the sculptor sets free the statue within the marble—in the rough block he sees the perfect statue imprisoned and cuts away the useless marble that hides its beauty—so man, living in the studio of the world, becomes a sculptor, setting free the imprisoned Divine Beauty within him, by the mallet of love and the chisel of thought.

In the first stage, when he was on the path of pursuit, the Divine Plan for him was carried out for him, in spite of him. In the second stage, when he is on the path of release—he co-operates with the Divine Plan, till he becomes its conscious co-worker, which ultimately marks him out as a 'perfect' man.*

From the above perspective, a fundamental point emerges: that what is called materialism or the life of the material, outer world, is not outside the scope of spiritual purpose and plan, and is in some mysterious way, however hidden from our limited understanding, an integral part of the Divine Mind. As a Sufi poet has said:

"Belief and unbelief are galloping,
Both, on the road to Thee, both
calling loud
For what is the One Only Ultimate."

Significantly enough has Śrī Kṛṣṇa said in the *Bhagavadgītā*: "I am the gambling of the cheat, and the splendour of splendid things...". And, as if summing up, "As the mighty air everywhere

* Adapted, in parts, from Annie Besant: *The Spiritual Life*.

moving is rooted in Ākāśa, so all beings rest rooted in Me".

The outer life, then,—with its ever-unfolding lessons and laws of growth for us—is one rung of the ladder of human evolution. The other, consisting of a conscious and deliberate endeavour for union with the Divine, is given the name of the spiritual path proper. When people vaguely talk of 'spirituality', they refer to some qualities, stage or phase of this path. Spirituality, in its final phase, truly consists in conscious union with the Divine.

III

When the ego of man, driven by desire, rushes into the world in search of life, reality, joy, it embodies itself with the texture of the universe—the five Tattvas (elements)—and dips itself into experience after experience, from infancy to youth, from youth to old age; and when the body decays, then after a sojourn in its own plane and the subtle planes, back into life over and over again. It develops certain qualities in the process of this experience; but when it ultimately gains the knowledge that the object of its search is not in the appearances of the world but only its shadows, it gasps with pain, and turns to ask: who am I; what is this world; what am I here for; where is the object of my search? When these questions arise, there is the beginning of Jijñāsa. Gradually, as he discovers the transitoriness and unreality of the world outside; and within, that *he* is not the body, that *he* is not his desire-nature, that *he* is not his mind, he attains a dispassion for the outer world and for these senses of cognition of this outer world. As he

perfects this attitude, he comes to a point where he becomes completely desireless. When that point is reached, the man, being desireless, is not drawn to the world any more, and becomes a Jivanmukta.

Him the Gods envy from their lower seats;
Him the Three worlds in ruin should not shake;
All life is lived for him, all deaths are dead;
Karma will no more make
New houses. Seeking nothing, he gains all;
Foregoing self, the Universe grows "I".
If any teach Nirvāna is to cease,
Say unto such they lie.
If any teach Nirvāna is to live,
Say unto such they err; not knowing this,
Nor what light shines beyond their broken lamps,
Nor lifeless, timeless, bliss.*

The Pilgrim has now reached his goal and become one with God, Truth, Bliss: Sat-Chit-Ānanda. What is this Truth, or God? Who can say? We can realize It only when we become one with It.

"Om Amitaya ! measure not with words.
Th' Immeasurable: nor sink the string of thought
Into the Fathomless. Who asks both err,
Who answers, errs. Say nought!"

This, in a nutshell, marks the spiritual path, spirituality and the consummation of spirituality.

IV

And yet is He "closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet"!

Here Religion comes to man's aid. All things to all men: Religion, through its elementary moral laws, teaches the man of the world, addicted to the passing pleasures of life, that he must share these with his fellow-men and limit his own wants by the laws of Gṛhstha-Dharma. Thus are the seeds of 'service' sown in the selfish, egoistic creature, and many other higher qualities developed. Through its philosophy, it teaches the man of action, the *spiritual technique* of action itself, spiritualizing action into sacrifice and selfless service. Which 'wisdom of the world' has given us a more glorious technique of action than the *Bhagavadgītā*? Through Yoga, Religion teaches the man who is satiated with desires and so-called action, the art of renunciation. It teaches the man attached to renunciation, the renunciation of renunciation, leading him to complete and eternal Union with the Divine—Sat-Chit-Ānanda—Jñāna, Mokṣa—the *summum bonum* of spiritual life, indeed of all life.

The exoteric laws of Religion—relating to the senses, intellect and conduct of man—are for the men of the world, men who live by desire and egoistic action; the esoteric teachings of Religion are for men who are satiated with desire and egoistic action, and are 'ready'—Adhikārī—for renunciation.

Adhikārī—let us note.

Behind this word is a part of the diagnosis of the disease.

Religious laws lay down canons of study, service and purity for the Brahmachārī, of social duty and adjustments for the Gṛhastha; and only when

man has undergone the crucible of this twofold experience, is he an Adhikārī for the path of renunciation (*Vānaprastha*) and freedom (*Sannyāsa*). These stages do not necessarily and rigidly refer to a man's age, but to his experience. These are outer nomenclature given to one's natural evolution. True renunciation is the flower of experience, and comes when one is satiated with desires, as a result of his experience of their futility as a will-o'-the-wisp. A person who is full of wants and desires, but renounces *activity*, is not spiritual, but a hypocrite. He stagnates by inaction, and is thus worse than a so-called worldly man who is engaged in work and enriches his experience. It is because many people in our credulous country take to the form and miss the spirit of religious teaching that they are often prematurely misled into so-called renunciation, which is futile and mischievous. They forget that Religion lays down different laws for people in different stages of experience. It prescribes action, action, action, for the student and the householder. Only, it prescribes laws of action: laws of Dharma and righteousness, harmonious, creative action leading not only to personal progress and salvation but to harmony in society, and not egoistic indulgence miscalled action leading to a total absence of Peace and harmony in individual life and to disharmony and a perpetual state of discontent, competition and war in society.

"The fruit of good action", says *Bhagavadgītā*, "is harmonious and spotless; verily the fruit of Motion is pain, and the fruit of Inertia unwisdom".

Many of those who propound perpetual action and scorn religion are caught in the whirlpool of Motion, and miscall it action! On the other hand, Religion constantly urges man to righteous action. Only when a man has done his part and discharged his duties to himself and to society, it suggests to ripe souls: renunciation, renunciation of desires and then renunciation of *doership*.

We read in the *Bhagavadgītā*:

"The harmonized man, having abandoned the fruit of action, attaineth to the eternal peace; the non-harmonized, impelled by desire, attached to fruit, are bound"...

"As the ignorant act from attachment to action, O Bhārata, so should the wise act without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world"...

"He who acteth, placing all actions in the Eternal, abandoning attachment, is unaffected by sin as a lotus leaf by the waters"...

"Thinking on THAT, immersed in THAT, established in THAT, solely devoted to THAT, they go whence there is no return, their sins dispelled by wisdom."

So, Religion is the *bridge-builder* between Spirituality and Materialism, leading one, by its graded laws—into whose beauties, in their purity, it would be outside the scope of this paper to go—from the depths of materialism to the peak of spirituality.

V

In a decaying civilization, empty forms remain without soul. True Religion gets mixed up, often covered by, superstitions, dogmas, empty beliefs, and other exoteric crusts of ignorance. In the name of religion, customs and traditions grow and accumulate which

hinder, instead of helping, man's spiritual progress. Priestcraft degenerates into a curse. Communal and party dissensions, dissensions between creeds and cults, grow. And verily, man makes God in his own image.

So also in the decaying civilization of this country, a large number of people turn ascetics or Sādhus or Sannyāsins in form, though only a few are real Sādhus or Sannyāsins. That is no doubt a waste of man-power from the point of view of society, and should be checked. But we must sift the wheat from the chaff. The true Sannyāsi is entitled to our reverent service. Even the ordinary Government servant who has served up to the age of 55 claims from society no less than half the salary as his pension. Surely, a person who after a life well lived, renounces his all and expects only the barest living from society deserves our service. The pensioner perhaps passes his time playing cards. The Sannyāsi, even to our sight, spends his time in contemplation of the Truth. In truth, the true Sannyāsi does very much more. He is the hidden leader of humanity, the light-house pointing the way from the Unreal to the Real.

Under the caption "The Joy of the Return", Sri Jinarajadasa, in his own inimitable way, writes:-

"There comes a time in the soul's evolution when all experiences blend into one supreme experience, that he is returning to THAT whence he came...Then begins a wonderful symphony. For thenceforth all the forces of the Universe, which issued once from THAT, begin one by one to return to THAT through him. This mystery of the returning streams is in all things; the mineral

which is on the downward arc of life is ever dreaming of the joys of return; every blade and leaf, every bird and beast dimly dreams of the stage of return. The universe which came forth from THAT has ever as its driving force a power which makes it change from good to better, from better to best, steadily returning to THAT from whence it came. Every kingdom of life knows this mystery of return, though the life forces in each kingdom are cribbed, cabined and confined, and most patiently await the day when the path begins for the return.

"So when the soul begins his return, then all things begin to feel the commencement of their return also. The mountain ranges whisper "Brother, take us with you"; the clouds gaze on him saying "Take us, take us." Each dumb breast, each sinner among men, all despairing souls, feel in his presence the joy of the return, and sense for a while an alleviation of their miseries, and find solace in renewed strength to hope and dream".

Such has been the experience of mystics, saints and sages of all religious creeds, however differently expressed. Nevertheless, this is more or less mystic to most of us, hidden from our present sight. What of the ordinary people? Does not Spirituality lead man to inaction? I have attempted above to show that the message of religion to the ordinary man is true, harmonious action, action, action. I have referred to the gospel of *Bhagavadgītā*. But one may ask: what of the people, who, in the name of God and Fate, do not exert themselves? Well, I ask a counter-question: What of the endless stream of people in history who have done noble, great deeds in the name of God? There will always be

some people who will abuse anything, any teaching. It is the business of those who understand to correct them and lead them to the right path. But in killing the disease let us not kill the patient! It is not spirituality or religion which is to blame, but our understanding of spirituality and religion, or their misguided abuse by those who profess to follow them but in reality serve their own hidden egoistic ends. Let us correct our understanding, and turn the searchlight of Truth into our hearts and minds. Similarly, the truly spiritual man would never blame the materialist who, in life's training school, *honestly* follows the laws of growth and does not shirk Truth when it faces him, does not take shelter behind his five senses when the logic of his own path seeks to break their vicious circle. Then, an honest materialist is more spiritual than a dishonest spiritualist. In the so-called materialist West, there are many men and women in whose conduct spiritual qualities shine much more than in that of many persons in this our land of the R̄sis, who pride themselves on their spiritual heritage.

Finally, spiritual values—based as they are on eternal verities—are, and must always be, absolute values; unlike material values which are relative values. That is the basic distinction between them. The former produce the inner *culture* of a people; the latter can only produce their outer *civilization*, at best. Religion, at its best, is the bridge-builder between the two; at its worst, it often mixes up the two and forms a crust thereon, when it needs drastic reform. The wise have to sift the wheat from the chaff.

Srimad Bhagavadgita and the Present War Situation

By M. HAFIZ SYED, M. A., Ph. D., D. Litt.

The thought of the present war situation is uppermost in the mind of every person whether rich or poor, ignorant or wise. Everyone of us without exception is rightly worried as to what is going to happen to him. Death is staring us in our face, as the war is actually at our door.

Everyone is convinced that sooner or later he has to cast off his mortal coil. There is nothing so certain as death, whether it is due to the ravages of bombing and gun-shots or any epidemic, or natural death. No human being can escape the relentless hand of death. This inevitable situation is theoretically accepted by many but not actually borne in mind in daily life. We try ever so many ways of escape from the jaws of death, altogether forgetting that it is not really possible to do so.

Besides, there should be some difference between the attitude of those who know something of the problem of life and death and those who do not; to those whose outlook is wholly materialistic death is the cessation of life, while those whose outlook is spiritual, who believe in the continuity, indestructibility and eternity of life, have no fear of death.

Now the attitude of some who have had the inestimable privilege of studying and understanding the essential teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā* should be obviously different from those who do not believe in it. The most essential and fundamental problem discussed in the second Adhyaya is the relative value

of man's life and death. The Blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has fully, clearly and unambiguously explained to his favourite disciple, Arjuna, the futility of grieving over the inevitable. If death is the cessation of man's hopes and aspirations, no amount of grief and lamentations would bring him back to them. If, however, his innermost nature is invulnerable, free from change, decay and death, no weapon can cleave him, burn him and destroy him. The moment this conviction is borne in mind, he ceases to fear death and his mind becomes calm and tranquil. The shattering of outer form would never disturb his mind. He fully knows that no weapon, however destructive, can touch his inner being which is deathless and immortal.

So the right attitude for a believer in the teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā* should be to cultivate inward and unshakable conviction in the reality of his inner being and cast off all fear of his total disappearance with the death of his body.

This inner conviction by no means implies recklessness in any shape or form. No one can ever be absolved from his Swadharma. If he is a householder it is his duty to protect and look after his family. He should not, therefore, expose himself unnecessarily to any danger. But if it does come, he should face it manfully.

Defenceless and weaponless as we Indians are, we cannot possibly do any-

thing to protect our lives and limbs; nor can we inflict injury on our foe as a defensive measure. So the best course for us would be, to be non-violent as far as possible and to be prepared to lay down our bodies if we are attacked unawares, always remembering that "the Real Self of man is not born nor doth He die: Nor having been, ceaseth He any more to be; unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient. He is not slain when the body is slaughtered." (II. 20)

All that has been stated above is no piece of theological dogma to be taken as an article of blind faith. "The *Gītā*", in the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prem, "is not concerned with beliefs but with knowledge, and the above is a truth that becomes clear to the disciple even at this stage, and a calm descends upon the Soul as it realizes that neither can one slay, nor is any slain. Forms and personalities come and go inevitably, but that which lies behind them all can neither come nor go, for It for ever IS."

There is another reflection which is worthy of our consideration at the present moment. If it is pondered over it would give us heart and courage to

face any danger, however heart-rending it may be. If we had not to face the present war situation, Death would have overtaken us at its own right time in the shape of any epidemic, accident, old age or natural decay. All that has a beginning must have an end. How can this solid seeming world of names and forms ever survive? Constant change, decay and death are its very nature. Every outer form is but a passing phantom show which veils from sight the true and unchanging reality. "The unreal hath no being; the real never ceaseth to be." Where is then room for lamentation, grief and fear? Are these weighty arguments not enough to bring us sufficient peace of mind and unperturbed heart? If there is any time when our knowledge of the Divine words can be tested, it is the present one.

In the midst of darkness in which the whole world is enveloped today, the only ray of hope and light comes from the source of our being, the Life of our lives and the Supreme Being whom we call by various names. Let us draw ourselves to Him as closely as possible and take our refuge in Him.

Say, Do say Something, at least Now !

The desire of ages importunes at Your feet today—O dear, say something Yourself! All along it was I who spoke what came to my mind—and You silently went on hearing. But today Love is obstinate and insists that You should say something. Oh, this silence of yours presses my heart like a great, heavy load. O Love, let the screen be removed today which stands between the worshipped and the worshipper, erase the duality between the deity and the devotee, and let me forget that I and You ever remained I and You. O Image of Stone, say something today; let me hear something from You. Let me hear that You

also possess a heart, that it feels for somebody, that it has attraction for somebody, that it is also subject to attachment for somebody. Today my heart has grown refractory to take an inside view of Your heart. Prayers, praises, chanting of Psalms, Japa, askesis—all this is impossible for me today. I find that these performances kept always a gulf between You and me, and You and I could never become one. Therefore, denuding myself of the help of these practices, placing my arm on Your shoulder and touching You at the chin, I beseech You, again and again, O Love, say something. Say, do say something at least now!

To The Goddess

BY SADHU EKARASA

I

1. O Mother, by Thy Grace divine Thou hast revealed a glimpse of Thy pure glory; but this mad seeker does not desire mere memory of Thee. Why makest Thou Thyself undone Thy gracious gift ?
2. Great Goddess, come, annihilate all mineness in experience of Thee. It is no use.
3. Thou 'rt teasing me so much, O Mother, Thou hast shown Thyself, withdrawn Thyselv a thousand times. When will this play come to an end ? When wilt Thou mercifully take my life ? My longing is unutterably deep.
4. I do not want mere memory of Thee, O Goddess Who art the Truth at the bottom of my heart. For memory is like a screen that hides Thee from me, here, now to be beheld, to be united with, to be enjoyed in Bliss.
5. And yet, Great Goddess, apart from seeing Thee when Thou art teasing me with Thy sweet tempting glimpses, do not the thousand-and-one flowers of life remind me all of Thee ?
6. I don't want any of the thousand, but the fragrance of the one both first and last I long for with a passion unbearable within the vortex of my heart,—for which, too, Thou art responsible.
7. There's nothing either in existence or in non-existence, for which Thou 'rt not responsible, O Mother Goddess. Thus please Thyself ! Who am I to wriggle in Thy grasp !
8. I desire to be chanting hymns and praising Thee, O Ruler of the World, and yet my lips are stammering reproaches. What shall I do ?
9. Sweet Mother, I want to surrender all this at Thy feet and cease to merely exist, and yet I am arguing and positing conditions. It is Thine own fault. Strange are Thy ways.
10. I cannot bear to be non-speaking. I must proclaim to all the world what Thou art worth: That Thou art Truth, and yet the Māyā show, Reality and yet the Universe, the One and yet the Many,—How clever this deceit !

11. Why shouldst Thou take such pains to play with one as insignificant as this ? Is it, because at heart he's Siva, Pure Consciousness, Thy Lord ?
12. I shall expose Thy tricks. In spite of all Thy Power, Thou art a woman pure and simple, and Thou hast caught me with Thy magic art. If Māyā fails, Thou hast far better means to put us mortals down. More powerful than Māyā is this art. See, I am helpless at Thy feet.

* * * *

II

13. Thy power is ruling my life, O Goddess,
In the big things which come like thunder and lightning,
As well as in the small,
Which come like the caress of a flower on my forehead.
14. O Mother,
When Thou art opening the lotus of my heart,
There are tears in my eyes;
But it's not mere devotion,
Here is neither sorrow nor joy,
Here is nothing as commonly put into words:
It is a secret between Thee and Me.
15. It is Fullness and Nothingness both.
It is the glorious vessel of crystal
Full to the brim with the unnameable fluid,—
Yet empty, with the naked fire, all-consuming, within.
16. O Goddess, Thou art the Lodestone of creation:
With one pole Thou art distracting,
With the other attracting my mind
Continuously.
17. Thy two magnetic powers are but one,
When Thou art blissfully united to Thy Lord.
Then all stammering ceases—
But eyes are full of tears.
18. I am ignorant, and know no philosophy,
Neither do I care to learn any
Except such as is taught in the heart
In exalted communion of Thee with Thy Lord,
O Goddess Who dispelst darkness.
19. In the depth o' the jungle of talk,
Full of wild beasts,

There is an Āśrama of great beauty;
 Its name is Mouna.
 Thou art seen playing about in the jungle, O Mother,
 But in the Āśrama is Thy Home,
 Which—strange—Thou never leavest,
 As a good mother.

20. All things in the Universe, O Goddess,
 From the subtlest to the grossest
 Thou hast provided for God-worship and enjoyment.
 But in a playful mood
 Thou hast veiled Thy intention and made it a secret.
21. So we are darkly worshipping (enjoying)
 Wrong objects by wrong methods in wrong places,
 Thus it seems.
 As dirt is matter out of place
 Sin is a striving out of hand.
 Thus we have found
 With laughter and with tears, O Goddess of the World,
 To learn and see
 That all objects are "wrong"
 And that there is One Right one only in reality:
 The Subject-Object-Whole.
 Thus it is.
 The right place is here, the right time is now,
 And the right method art Thou.
22. The glory is—and how else could it be ?
 That never there is interruption in Thy bliss;
 And "all the rest" is but a playful dream
 Produced by laughter, blood-sharp, from Thy mouth divine.

* * * *

III

23. Thy Earth and Thy Heavens six are most enchanting, O Great Goddess,
 But more enchanting far art Thou in Thy true form as Bliss-Consciousness Itself.
24. Frightening are Thy seven hells and netherworlds, O Goddess !
 But far more terrible art Thou when with the sword of knowledge
 Thou cuttest off my head,
 Even though I strive to offer it humbly at Thy feet.
25. Thou art the Heart, O Mother, where the Lord dwells,
 And in that centre of the Universe the happy and the terrible
 are both consumed by Grace.

26. Men dare to ask whether Thou art really existing,
O Goddess of the world !
Thou art more real than the atoms of their doubting brains.
Thy glory will still shine in forms divine
Long after men as we now know will've passed away
With habits, vanities and fancies all.
27. Even forms Thou takest, Goddess, in the inner shrine but one
Are much more real than the eyes of body and of soul
Thou hast created for the purpose of beholding Thee.
Yet the secret of Thy true Existence, Most Mighty Goddess,
Is known but to Thy Lord.
28. On great Pūja-days men everywhere remember Thee,
O Goddess of the world !
But this heart yearns for constant vision,
For everlasting Pūjā in waking, dreaming, sleeping !
Nothing less could ever still the flame of passion
Within this heart.
29. It is Thy tune we're playing on the Viṇa of the mind
(The strings the soul, the wood the body gross);
Mayest Thou perfect the tune, O Pure and Lustrous One !
In the harmony of melody, in the glory of Thy dance
The Lord in the inmost shrine is rapt in ecstasy.
30. When sin roars wildly in the jungle
And claws of fire destroy and maim,
When dragon's poison floods the seven sees,
Enchanting Peace smiles from Thy face serene.
31. When the drum drones drowsily,
When the frogs croak buoyantly,
When vain pomposity lifts up its head or tail,
Thy knife-sharp laughter is ringing loudly, unheard, swallowing all.
32. It's always Thou, testing Silence in the heart;
Does it respond when Thou art speaking as the Silence Pure
Amid the din and movement of Thy Play ?
33. It's Thou, for there is no thing, no one but Thou.
There is none else. There is no He. There is no I but Thou
34. And I prostrate to Thee,
O Beauteous One of Glory Pure,
As dust is kissing dust
And light is merging into light.

35. Thy laughter, Goddess Great,
Is fashioning the toys of life
Within, without, in ever dancing bliss.
Thy laughter is the essence of it all.
36. And in the end—as ever was and ever will be—
There is no thing, no nothing, there is no mind, no universe, no
“Thou”, and Death is LIFE !

Unto Bliss

Remember: He who even once has enjoyed the privilege of sight of a saint, of hearing his advice, of a touch from his hand, or of placing on the head the dust of his feet, has become qualified to attain supreme bliss and supreme peace.

Remember: Let alone the sight, touch, hearing of advice, or taking the dust of feet of a saint, he who even meditates on a saint attains purity of heart and becomes qualified for God-realization.

Remember: The sight of a saint, and discovery of a saint, result in supreme good. By coming in contact with a saint even unknowingly, one becomes sinless through the influence of the saint's virtues, which are by nature destructive of sins.

Remember: Saints can never do any injury to anyone. If they curse anybody, the result of it turns only into good. Devarṣī Nārada had cursed Nalakubera and Maṇigrīva and the latter had been turned into a pair of Arjuna trees, but in the end this became the cause of their enjoying the sight of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Remember: Saints do good even to those who do them injury. It may be

possible for the ambrosia to bring one death but a saint can never do one injury. The axe cuts the sandal-wood, but the sandal-wood by its inherent virtue imparts its scent to the wooden handle of the axe and turns it into sandal-wood. Similarly, the saint does good even to his persecutor.

Remember: It is the nature of saints to do good to others; they live only for others' good. They do not consciously make any effort, and yet automatically they bring blessings to others.

Remember: The saint lives himself beyond the pleasure and pain of the world, he has no attachment for any worldly object; in no circumstance he becomes subject to the influence of the ego and yet he appears as being subject to joy and sorrow in sympathy with the joy and sorrow of others. This is his nature.

Remember: The saint has no attachment for the body, he regards the body as unreal. In his view there is no existence except that of God. And yet he easily sacrifices his own body in order to prevent sufferings with which the bodies of others are overtaken. This is also his nature.

Remember: None can recognize a saint with the help of his intellect merged in the attractions of the world. The saint lives far above the thoughts of the intellect. None can recognize him through any external signs and marks. The discovery and recognition of a saint is possible only through God's grace and the grace of saints. Therefore, pray only to God and to the saints

for the privilege of association with and recognition of a saint.

Remember: The best form of service and worship of saints lies in following with reverence and courage the path shown by them. He who by his own practices pays homage to the practices of saints renders service to saints in its true and real sense.

"Śiva"

Ideal Lessons from Maharaj Yudhishthira's Life - II

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

WISDOM, INTELLECTUAL POWER AND IMPARTIALITY

On one occasion Dharma himself assumed the form of a deer in order to test Yudhiṣṭhīra. Picking up with its horns the fire producing wood of an Agnihotra Brahmana, the deer repaired to the forest. In his anxiety to recover the wood, the Brahmana came to Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra and represented his loss to the latter. He solicited Yudhiṣṭhīra to find out the wood by any means, so that the practice of Agnihotra might not be disturbed. When Yudhiṣṭhīra heard this request, he took his four brothers along with him and entered far into the forest in search of the deer following its footsteps. But the deer was nowhere to be found, and all the brothers, oppressed by thirst and thoroughly exhausted, came for rest under the shade of an Indian fig tree. After some rest, Nakula sought Yudhiṣṭhīra's permission, and started in search of water. He soon came upon a reservoir of water, but as soon as he attempted to slake his thirst with the clear water of the lake, an ethereal voice

interrupted him with these words:—"O Nakula, son of Mādrī, I am the owner of this place. None can drink water from this lake without answering my questions. First, therefore, answer my questions and then drink the water, and carry water for your brothers." But Nakula, being acutely oppressed by thirst, did not pay heed to the ethereal voice, and drank from the lake. The result was that he soon fell down dead. Owing to his failure to return though a long time passed, Sahadeva, Arjuna and Bhīma these three brothers, under Yudhiṣṭhīra's instruction, came one after another near the lake in search of Nakula, and being oppressed by thirst all the three drank the water ignoring the warning of the Yakṣa, and all met with their death. Finally, Yudhiṣṭhīra himself had to come near the lake. Discovering there the corpses of his four brothers, he was struck with overwhelming sorrow and wonder. He began to examine the cause of their unexpected death. He found the water to be faultless and the corpses without any mark of external

injury. He, therefore, failed to understand how they met with their death. After sometime, oppressed similarly by excessive thirst, when he advanced to drink from the lake, he heard the warning of the ethereal voice. Yudhiṣṭhira, when he heard this warning, asked whose the voice was. The voice replied that it was that of a Yakṣa, and further added—"Though I gave them the warning, your brothers did not answer my questions, and heedlessly drank from this lake. That is why I caused their death. You also can drink this water after answering my questions. If you ignore this warning, you will meet the fate of your brothers." Yudhiṣṭhira said—"O Yakṣa, you may ask your questions. I shall try to answer them to the best of my ability and power." Thereupon the Yakṣa put many questions and Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira gave his answers to them. Without quoting all those questions, we are giving below the major part of Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira's replies to them. In answer to the Yakṣa, Yudhiṣṭhira said:

Through study of the Vedas one becomes proficient in the Vedas. Practice of austerities brings greatness. Gravity and patience bring worldly alliance. Man acquires wisdom through service of elders. Works done according to the injunctions of the three Vedas invariably produce their desired results. He who keeps the mind under control does not become a prey to grief. Friendship cultivated with a great soul never wears out. Through renunciation of honour man becomes dear to all. Through renunciation of anger man becomes free from sorrow and distress. Through renunciation of desires objects

are gained. Renunciation of greed brings happiness. Practice of one's own Dharma is austerity, control over mind is true control (रम), capacity to endure is forbearance, withdrawal from an unworthy act is the true form of bashfulness, knowledge of the reality is true knowledge, calmness of the mind is true tranquillity, the desire of happiness for all is uprightness. Anger is man's enemy. Greed is a terrible ailment. He who is devoted to the welfare of all creatures is holy, and he who is cruel at heart is unholy. Neglect in the practice of Dharma is insensibility, sense of worthiness is pride, inefficiency in the practice of Dharma is idleness, indulgence in grief is foolishness, firmness in one's Dharma is steadiness. Control of the senses is firmness, purification of the mind is true bath. Protection of living beings is true charity. He who knows Dharma is learned, the atheist is ignorant. The desire which moves one within the cycle of births and deaths is lust. The burning felt in the heart at the sight of another's growth is covetousness. Pride is unwisdom. False show of virtue is hypocrisy. Fault-finding attitude with regard to another is equivalent to backbiting. He who lacks faith in the Vedas, Scriptures, Brahmanas, Devas, obsequial oblations and manes meets with eternal hell. He whose words are sweet becomes universally popular. He whose acts are guided by thought generally attains victory. He who increases his friends leads a happy life. He who is devoted to Dharma attains virtues. What can be a greater wonder than this that though people die everyday, the rest of the living expect to carry on indefinitely

their mortal life.* Undoubtedly the richest man is he to whom favourable circumstances and unfavourable, pleasure and pain, past and future all are equal.† The Yakṣa felt supremely pleased when he got answers to his many questions in this vein. Thereupon while giving permission to Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra to drink water from the lake, he said—“From these four dead brothers, whomsoever you want to be alive, I shall make alive.” Yudhiṣṭhīra replied, “Let Nakula be alive.” Taken aback when he heard Yudhiṣṭhīra seeking this boon, the Yakṣa said, “Well, Sir, why do you want Nakula to be alive, leaving Bhīma, who possessed the strength of ten thousand elephants, or Arjuna, on whose incomparable military prowess rests the whole of your future?” Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra replied, “He who renounces his Dharma is destroyed by Dharma; and he who protects Dharma is protected by Dharma.‡ O Yakṣa, I am known to all as being devoted to Dharma, therefore I say let Nakula be alive; I cannot renounce my Dharma. My father had two wives, Kuntī and Mādrī; I want that both of them should have their progeny on earth. Mothers Kuntī and Mādrī are both equally my mothers, I make no distinction between them. I want to maintain an impartial attitude towards both of them. (I, Kuntī's son being

* अहन्यहनि भूतानि गच्छन्तीह यमालयम् ।

शेषाः स्थिरत्वमिच्छन्ति किमाश्वर्यमतः परम् ॥

(Mahābhārata, Vana. ccxxiii. 116.)

† तुरुद्ये श्रियाप्रिये यस्य सुखदुरुद्ये तथैव च ।

अर्तातानागते चोमे स वै सर्वधनी नरः ॥

(Ibid. ccxxiii. 121.)

‡ धर्म एव हतो हन्ति धर्मो शक्ति रक्षितः ॥

(Ibid. ccxxiii. 128.)

alive), let (Mādrī's son) Nakula be alive.* For maintenance of an equal attitude is the greatest virtue according to every religion.” The Yakṣa was extremely pleased when he heard these virtuous words of Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra. He said, “O Yudhiṣṭhīra, you are undoubtedly a great and righteous soul; in your view Dharma holds a superior position than worldly riches and objects of worldly gratification. Let all your four brothers be alive.” As soon as he said this, all the four brothers got back their lives. Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra then humbly besought the Yakṣa to tell who he was. Thereupon, the Yakṣa revealed his identity by saying, “Child Yudhiṣṭhīra, I am Dharma himself, your father. In order to test you, I myself assumed the form of a deer, and escaped with the fire-producing wood of the Brahmana.” With these words, Dharma returned the wood to Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra and asked the latter to seek any boon from him. Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra replied, “O Lord, you are the eternal Lord of celestials. Your very sight has brought complete satisfaction to me. I shall accept whatever boon you may be pleased to confer on me. O Lord, be pleased to grant that I may ever attain victory over evils like anger, greed, infatuation, etc., and that my mind may ever remain devoted to

* धर्मशीलः सदा राजा इति मां मानवा विदुः ।
स्वधर्मान्त्र चलिष्यामि नकुलो यक्ष जीवतु ॥
कुन्ती चैव तु माद्री च द्वे भावे तु पितुर्मम ।
उभे सपुत्रे स्यातां वै इति मे धीयते मतिः ॥
यथा कुन्ती तथा माद्री विशेषो नास्ति मे तयोः ।
मातृस्यां सममिच्छामि नकुलो यक्ष जीवतु ॥

(Ibid. ccxxiii. 130—132)

charity, austerity and Truth."* Dharma said, "O Pāñdava, these virtues you already possess as part and parcel of your character. You are the very embodiment of Dharma, and yet inasmuch as you have sought from me, let these virtues be yours." With this utterance, Dharma disappeared.

It is quite possible that owing to our appearance on earth in the present materialistic age, we may not truly appreciate the inward implications of the answers given by Maharaj Yudhišthira, or may fail to appraise the value of his character, but if we can take a dispassionate view, the great personality of the righteous king will be revealed to us, when these words of his full of learning, wisdom and the spirit of equality will compel us to pay him our homage. His life was wholly free from any trace of evils like anger, greed, infatuation, etc.; he was the very embodiment of divine qualities like charity, austerity and Truth; and yet he sought them as boons. All praise to this humility, this lack of self-conceit and pride!

YUDHIŠTHIRA'S PURITY

When Maharaj Yudhišthira and his brothers concealed themselves in the city of Virāṭa to pass the stipulated period one year's incognito life, the Kauravas adopted various means to discover them, but without success. The courtiers suggested many methods for the search, but all this proved unavailing. In the end, the great Bhīṣma

suggested a method. He said, "In my opinion, the methods which have been adopted till now, or are about to be adopted, to discover the Pāñdavas were and are wholly unfit for that purpose. For, how is it possible for ordinary messengers to trace them? The way to find them is this, please hear all of you with attention. The place or locality where the pure-hearted Yudhišthira, the conqueror of his senses, resides, no evil will befall its king. The citizens of that State will be charitable, generous, peaceful, modest, sweet-speaking, conquerors of their senses, devoted to Truth, well-fed, well nourished, pure and sharp-witted. They will be free from envy, malice, pride and covetousness and devoted to their respective Dharmas.* The clouds will undoubtedly copiously shower in that region. The entire locality will be full of wealth and corn and free from disease. The grains there will be full of substance, the fruits full of luscious juice, the flowers rich with smell, the pure air will give a pleasant sensation to the body, and the cows will be healthy, yielding copious milk. The place will be, in fact, a very image of Dharma. Men there will be devoted to right conduct, loving, contented, free from untimely death. They will be devoted to worship of the celestials, energetic

* तत्र तात न तेषां हि राजां भाव्यमसम्प्रतम् ।
पुरे जनपदे चापि यत्र राजा युधिष्ठिरः ॥
दानशीले बद्धान्यश्च निश्चूतो हीनपेवकः ।
जनो जनपदे भान्यो यत्र राजा युधिष्ठिरः ॥
प्रियवादी सदा दानो भव्यः सत्यपरो जनः ।
हृष्टः पुष्टः शुचिर्दक्षो यत्र राजा युधिष्ठिरः ॥
नारायणो न चापीरुन्नभिमानी न मत्सरी ।
भविष्यति जनसत्र स्वयं धर्मसनुब्रतः ॥

* जयेयं लोभमोहौ च क्रोधं चाहं सदा विभो ।
दाने तपसि सत्ये च मनो मे सततं भवेत् ॥

and strict in their observance of Dharma. They will be ever devoted to service of others. O child, Truth, patience, charity, supreme peace, unfailing forgiveness, modesty, beauty, fame, glory, gentleness and simplicity these virtues constantly stay in Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira. Even well-qualified Brahmanas fail to recognize Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira, possessed of these qualities. How is it possible for ordinary men to recognize him?"* When Bhīṣma said this, he was seconded by Kṛpāchārya.

Let the reader ponder over the extent of purity in Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira's life. The above description shows the climax of purity. When this climax is reached merely because of Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira's presence in a locality, the true extent of his purity will naturally baffle our imagination.

LIBERALITY

Similarly, Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira's liberality was extraordinary. One feels charmed at his behaviour towards Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who had sent the Pāṇḍavas to be burnt alive in the house made of shellac, who had felt not the least remorse at the sight of the Pāṇḍavas' departure to lead the life of banishment for thirteen years. Fifteen years after the battle of Kurukṣetra, and on the eve of his retirement to the forest for performance of austerities, Dhṛtarāṣṭra sent Vidura to Emperor Yudhiṣṭhira with request for some money for

expenditure over charities. When Yudhiṣṭhira heard the request, he immediately sent the following message through Vidura:—"My body and all my wealth belong to you. Every single thing in my palace belongs to you. You may use them all according to your desire without feeling any hesitation." When Dhṛtarāṣṭra heard the message, his joy knew no limits. Performing obsequial oblations to Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Somadatta, Jayadratha, Duryodhana, and his other sons, grandsons and all departed friends, he began to perform charities. Horses, villages, cows and innumerable other objects decked with clothes, dresses, gold, precious stones and ornaments were freely given away. According to far-sighted Yudhiṣṭhira's instructions, he whom Dhṛtarāṣṭra ordered to give a hundred was given a thousand, he who was asked to be given a thousand was given ten thousands.* That is to say, the Brahmanas were thoroughly satisfied with gifts of innumerable objects on a lavish scale, even as the earth gets satisfied with copious fall of rains from the clouds. Dhṛtarāṣṭra felt himself exhausted through continuous performance of charities for ten days at a stretch.

Let us impartially weigh this liberality of Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhira and compare it with the narrowness of the present day. The difference will appear as wide as the difference between heaven and earth. It is no secret how the majority of people of the present day

* धर्मात्मा शक्यते जातुं नापि तात द्विजातिभिः ॥
किं पुनः प्राकृत्स्नात पार्थो विज्ञायते कवित् ।
यस्मिन् सत्यं धृतिर्दीर्घं परा शान्तिर्वाचा क्षमा ॥
हीः श्रीः कीर्तिः परं तेज आनशंस्यमथार्जवम् ।

* शते देवे दशशतं सहस्रे चायुतं तथा ।
शीयते वचनाद्राष्टः कुन्तीपुत्रस्य धीमतः ॥

deceive even their parents and friends, let alone those who do them evil. When the parents grow old, it appears burdensome to maintain them with food and clothing even on an ordinary scale.

SELF-DENIAL

Here is a story relating to his ascent to heaven. Maharaj Yudhišthira was climbing the Himalayas, when Draupadī and afterwards Yudhišthira's four brothers dropped down dead, one after another, in the eternal snows. A dog was only left behind, which continued to follow Yudhišthira. At that time, the king of celestials, Indra, came to Yudhišthira in his celestial car. He invited Yudhišthira to sit in the car. Yudhišthira replied, "This dog, which has kept me company up to now will also accompany me to heaven." Indra said, "There is no place in heaven for those who keep dog. Please give up the dog." But Yudhišthira replied, "O Lord of celestials, what do you ask me to do? It is said that renunciation of one who is devoted is as great a crime as the murder of a Brahmana. Therefore, it is impossible for me to abandon the dog for the sake of my own happiness.* I can never think of abandoning one who is subject to fear, who is devoted, who surrenders himself saying, 'I have no other protector than you', who is weak and who begs for his life, even if it may

cost my life. This solemn vow I maintained throughout my life."* When he heard this, the Lord of celestials, Indra, said, "O Yudhišthira, when you have abandoned your brothers, abandoned your dear wife Draupadī, why do you show such extraordinary attachment for this dog?" Yudhišthira replied, "O Lord, I abandoned them when they had left their bodies, not when they were alive. I have no power to bring life to the dead. I, again, submit to you that in my opinion the sin of abandoning a devoted creature is equal to the four types of sin like threatening a surrendered soul, murder of the wife, theft of a Brahmana's wealth and injuring a friend.† Therefore, I say, I can in no case abandon this dog."

Hearing these determined words, Dharma, who had been following Yudhišthira assuming the form of a dog, revealed himself. Overwhelmed with joy, he said, "O Yudhišthira, declaring a dog to be your devoted friend, you have renounced even the life in heaven. There is none in heaven who can compete with you in renunciation. You have attained the supreme divine state." Thus Dharma, Indra and the other celestials all began to shower their

* भीतं भक्तं नान्यदस्तीति चातं
प्राप्तं क्षीणं रक्षणे प्राणलिप्सुम्।
प्राणत्यगादप्यहं नैव मोक्षं
यतेयं वै नित्यमेतद् व्रतं मे ॥

(*Ibid.* III. 12)

+ भीतिप्रदानं शरणागतस्य
क्रिया वधो ब्राह्मणस्वापहारः ।
मित्रद्रोहस्तानि चत्वारि शक
भक्त्यागश्चैव समो मतो मे ॥

(*Ibid.* III. 16)

* भक्त्यागं प्राहुरनन्तपाणं
तुल्यं लोके ब्रह्मवध्याकृतेन ।
तस्माद्वाई जातु कथञ्चनाच
त्यक्ष्याम्बनं स्वसुखार्थं महेन्द्र ॥

(*Mahāprasthāna.* III. 11)

praises on Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra and taking him up in a celestial car brought him to heaven.

Dear reader ! Compare this with the state as it obtains in the present-day world. Even today thousands of people go on pilgrimage to Badarikāśrama and other places, but how do they generally treat their companions ? Let alone dogs and other animals, even if a near relative falls ill on the way, a modern pilgrim leaves him alone and marches ahead. He ignores the cry of distress of the ailing pilgrim and goes in search of his own salvation. But this is nothing but an error on his part. God, who is the very embodiment of compassion, judges a man by his thoughts. His doors are always closed against those who are devoid of Love. The fact is we are tested by God by being placed in a circumstance like this. When faced with such a circumstance we should devote ourselves with pleasure, with a loving heart, and taking it to be a direction from God, to the service of the helpless, diseased and distressed. To leave them suffering on the way tantamounts to our dropping with our own hands the screen which separates us from the auspicious and sacred Abode of God. If we make our pilgrimages consistently with the performance of these duties which may crop up on the way, there is no doubt that just as Dharma revealed himself before Yudhiṣṭhīra owing to his clinging to the dog for the sake of Dharma even so God may reveal Himself before us.

CONCLUSION

Many great souls devoted to Dharma have appeared on earth, but it was

Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra alone, who was addressed as "Dharmarāja", the pious and righteous king. The entire life of Yudhiṣṭhīra was inspired with the spirit of Dharma. That is why even today the appellation of "Dharmarāja" is applied only to him. All the marks of Dharma indicated by the scriptures were more or less present in him. He was a living representative of the ten aspects of Dharma* mentioned by Maharaj Manu, the Law-giver. The twenty-six divine qualities† mentioned in the *Gītā* and the ten items of Yama and Niyama‡ laid down by Maharsi Patañjali were almost all present in him. He was the very embodiment of the general aspects of Dharma as described in the *Mahābhārata*. Only eight stories culled from the history of his life have been described in this article, but it is no exaggeration to say that his

* धृतिः क्षमा दमोऽस्तेयं शोचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।
धीरिद्या सत्यमक्रोधो दशकं धर्मलक्षणम् ॥

(*Manu VI. 92*)

"Firmness, forgiveness, control of mind, non-theft, purification of the body, sense-control, understanding, wisdom, Truth and non-anger,—these are the ten aspects of Dharma."

† *Vide Gita Chap. XVI. 1-3.*

‡ अहिंसासत्यात्तेयत्रद्वचर्यापरियहा यमाः ।

(*Yogasūtra II. 30*)

"Non-injury to creatures, Truth, non-theft, Brahmacharya and non-possession are Yamas."

शौचसन्तोषतपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः ।

(*Yogasūtra II. 32*)

"Purification of body, contentment, austerities, study of scriptures and meditation on God are Niyamas."

whole life was woven with the warp and woof of virtue and righteous conduct.

When the occasion arose Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra gave practical demonstration through action and not through mere speech alone, of virtues like absence of hatred, patience, forgiveness, non-anger, etc. Truth was like his life itself. In the observance of Truth, he is considered even today as peerless and incomparable. Every word of his appeared full of learning and wisdom, this is brought out clearly even by the story of his conversation with the Yakṣa. For maintenance of the spirit of equality, he ignored the attraction for even his uterine brothers. His purity was so great that it purified even the place where he resided. Inspired by his virtues like control over the mind and body, people of the locality where he lived automatically imbibed the virtue of self-restraint. In the matter of sac-

rifice of self-interest, he was a rare and unique specimen of humanity. For the sake of an ordinary dog, he threw away the temptation of a life in heaven. Every action of his used to be infused with the spirit of self-sacrifice and compassion. The great generosity showed by him when Dhṛitarāṣṭra sought a little money demonstrates his incomparable spirit of self-sacrifice. Sacrifice, charity, austerity, energy, peace, modesty, humility, lack of greed, devotion to friends and dependants and many other similar virtues were observed fully manifested in him. If we regulate our life placing before us the life of Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra, the repository of all virtues, as our ideal, there will remain no doubt about our reaching the blessed state. It is my humble submission to my readers that they should try their very best to absorb in life the virtues of Maharaj Yudhiṣṭhīra and lessons from his ideal conduct.

"He who would be blessed, let him scatter blessings.
He who would be happy, let him consider the happiness of others."

"If a man is troubled, perplexed, sorrowful, or unhappy,
let him ask:

"What mental seeds have I been sowing?"

"What seeds *am* I sowing?"

"What have I done for others?"

"What is my attitude towards others?"

"What seeds of trouble and sorrow and unhappiness
have I sown that I should thus reap these bitter weeds?"

Let him seek within and find, and having found,
let him abandon all the seeds of self, and sow, henceforth,
only the seeds of Truth."

Sankara, the Great Vedantist

BY LAURIE PRATT

Twelve centuries separate us from the time of Śankara, but the influence of his mighty intellect and flawless life is felt increasingly in India and in all lands where men seek guidance for divine inspiration.

Śankara is regarded in India as an incarnation of Śiva, one of the aspects of the threefold Godhead. The following passage is found in one of Śankara's works: "I prostrate not to the gods. One who is beyond all gods does not salute a god. After that stage, one does no prescribed act. I prostrate again and again to my own Self, which is the root of all endeavour...The Lord facing the south (Dakṣināmūrti, the Lord Śiva in the shape of a spiritual teacher) himself has composed this work entitled, *The Definition of One's Own Self*, which will dispel the darkness of ignorance and will carry one across the shoreless ocean of phenomenal existence. The sky of my mind is illumined by the sun of the Master, who is Lord Viṣṇu, that causes the lotus of realization to blossom."

HIS BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE

Śankara was born in 788 A. D.* in the Malabar section of the Deccan, the

* The controversy about the date of Sankara's birth has not yet been satisfactorily settled. The tradition of the Mutts and astronomical grounds point to a date a few centuries before the advent of Christ. According to lunar calculation the great Acharya

son of Śivaguru, a Brahmana of learning and devotion, who placed the child in a Vedic school at an early age. At three, Śankara was familiar with the Purāṇas and could read the deepest philosophy with understanding. He adopted the life of a wandering ascetic in his eighth year, and soon became the disciple of Govinda, a famous sage who taught from a mountain cave near the Nermuda river. The guru of Govinda was Gauḍapāda, who also accepted Śankara as his disciple. Three years later, when Śankara was only twelve, he wrote his famous Bhāṣya (commentary) on the *Brahma-Sūtras*, the essence of the Upaniṣads.

Miracles cluster thickly in the story of Śankara, as they do around all supremely enlightened men whose conscious oneness with the Universal has given them mastery over the forces of nature. This son of India, born with Yogic powers, was tenderly attached to his mother, and the tale goes that once, when she was suffering from the intense heat, he caused the river nearby to rise and cool her. Another story concerning his mother is that she opposed his plan to become a wandering Sannyāsin, and that he would not leave without her permission. One day a crocodile seized his foot as he was bathing, and he cried out to his mother

appeared on earth on the fifth day of the bright fortnight of Vaisakh, which falls this year on April 20.

that he would not release himself from the crocodile until she had promised to release him from home ties. In this way he won her reluctant consent.

Still another exercise of his Yogic power in connection with his mother occurred at her death. He had promised to return to her should she ever need him, and fulfilled his word by reaching her death-bed in time to give her instruction in divine knowledge. His life as a Yogi forbade that he witnessed her funeral rites; to overcome this difficulty, he caused her body to be consumed before his eyes by fire which spurted from his upraised hand.

Another interesting story concerns Śankara's favourite disciple, Sanandana. This young man, hearing his Guru's voice calling him from the opposite shore of a river, plunged into the water without hesitancy. Śankara caused a lotus flower to emerge from the dark depths to support each footfall of his disciple across the rushing river. From that day on, Sanandana was known as Padmapāda "lotus-foot". This same disciple later wrote a Bhāṣya which was accidentally burnt. Śankara had read it once and, to Padmapāda's joy, recited it faithfully from memory while the disciple wrote it down. It has been preserved for us as the *Pancapadikā*, a commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras*.

HIS UNIQUE PLACE AS A SCHOLAR

Śankara is unique among the outstanding spiritual teachers of the world in that he was a great scholar—"mightiest mind that ever dwelt in human body," in the opinion of Douglas Grant Duff Ainslie, the English philosopher—and left many written works

behind him. He did not, however, claim to be the originator of any new system of philosophy or plan of salvation, but regarded the ancient Vedas as the infallible, divinely inspired repository of Truth. He writes: "The Vedas are the highest authority, either because they are beginningless or because they are the utterances of the Supreme Lord. Knowledge, therefore, cannot result either by itself or from any other authority. The Vedic word which does not depend on any other proof, but on which depend proofs, is the only source of the knowledge of Brahma. As no authority is equal to the eye in the perception of forms, so no authority is equal to the Vedas in the realization of that which is beyond perception."

Śankara's main works are his commentaries on the first ten Upaniṣads, and on the *Brahma-Sūtras* and *Bhagavadgītā*. These Bhāṣyas earned him the title of Āchārya, "great spiritual teacher," (Śankarāchārya), and he is considered the foremost Vedantist, whose authority exceeds that of Rāmānuja, Vallabha and other celebrated Vedic commentators.

Vedānta means "end of the Vedas" and refers expressly to the Upaniṣads, which constitute not only the last part of the Vedic texts but also summarize the final and ultimate meaning of the entire scriptures. The principal teachings of the Vedānta, and hence of the Upaniṣads, were formulated by Vyāsa into a collection of aphorisms called the *Brahma-Sūtras*. These Sūtras have formed the subject-matter of various commentaries by different writers, but the first Bhāṣya on

them which is available to modern students, that of Śankara, is by far the most famous, due to its profound and subtle reasoning and power of illumination. Because of this, the Vedānta philosophy has come to mean the *Brahma-Sūtra* interpretation of Śankara.

HIS MONISTIC ADVAITA VIEWS

The great Āchārya insisted on a strict non-dualistic, absolutist interpretation of the Vedas, and credited his own Guru, Gauḍapāda, with the recovery of the monistic (*advaita*) creed of the Upaniṣads, which had been misinterpreted for centuries by commentators who professed to find grounds in the traditional scriptures for belief in dualism. According to Vedānta, individual souls (*jīva*) are but illusory manifestations of One Soul or pure consciousness, the Brahman; according to the Sāṅkhya philosophy, Jīvas are true and numerous. Sāṅkhya cosmology also claims the reality of Prakṛti (root principle of matter); Vedānta denies reality to anything except Brahman.

Śankara expounded his teacher Gauḍapāda's monistic views on the Vedas with additional insight of his own, and Śankara's Bhāsyas, rather than Gauḍapāda's, have been the basis for a host of additional commentaries by later Vedantists. But Śankara himself wrote a Bhāṣya on Gauḍapāda's work, and at the conclusion, he says that "he adores by falling at the feet of that great Guru, the adored of his adored, who on finding all the people sinking in the ocean made dreadful by the crocodiles of rebirth, out of kindness for all men, by churning the great

ocean of the Veda by his great rod of wisdom, recovered what lay deep in the heart of the Veda, hardly attainable even by the immortal gods."

In another place, Śankara eulogized the Guru thus:

"There is no known comparison in all the three worlds for the venerable teacher that bestows knowledge. If the philosopher's stone be assumed as such, it could only turn iron into gold, but not into another philosopher's stone. The venerable teacher, on the other hand, creates equality with himself in the disciple that takes refuge at his feet. He is therefore peerless, nay, even transcendental."

REORGANIZED ANCIENT SWĀMĪ ORDER

Śankara reorganized the ancient monastic Order of Swāmīs. The title of Swāmī can rightfully be bestowed on a disciple only by one who is himself a Swāmī, tracing his title from Śankara's time and following the life prescribed by the great Vedantist.

Śankara travelled about from place to place in India, meeting in public debate all the eminent sages of his time, and converting Buddhist, Sāṅkhya and Mīmāṃsā philosophers to his own monistic views of the Vedas. It is said that Vyāsa*, author of the *Brahma-Sūtras*, returned to earth in the guise of a Brahman scholar in order to debate with Śankara, thus testing the latter's Vedic knowledge. But even a superhuman

* One of the seven *Chirajivis*, literally, "beings endowed with longevity", whose manifestation is not confined to any one epoch.

adversary could find no flaws in the young Āchārya's exposition, and Śankara was admitted the victor.

An interesting story comes in here. At Śankara's birth, his horoscope was cast, in accordance with the ancient Hindu custom. The astrologer found that the boy was allotted but sixteen years of life. However, a short time later, a great Ṛṣi announced that Śankara's years would stretch to thirty-two.

When the Āchārya met and conquered Vyāsa in debate, the latter declared that, because of this great victory, Śankara's life span would be doubled. In this way, the predictions both of the astrologer and the Ṛṣi were justified. The disputation with Vyāsa presumably took place before or during Śankara's sixteenth year. It is interesting to note that both Jesus and Śankara had incarnations of about thirty-two years.

One more extraordinary story of Śankara must be told. The great Vedantist went to Benares to meet in debate the eminent Mīmāṃsā scholars of the day. Of these Kumārila was the chief, but he was then at death's door. He arranged for his own most distinguished follower, Mandana, the author of *Vidhviveka*, to meet Śankara. The Mīmāṃsāt was so much impressed by the superiority of Vedānta expounded by Śankara that he became a great Vedantist himself, taking the new name of Suresvara.

His wife, one of the greatest women of India, veritable Sarasvatī (goddess of wisdom), acted as umpire during the debate. Afterwards, she herself

engaged Śankara in controversy. Confident that the young ascetic knew nothing of the science and art of earthly love, however wise he undoubtedly was in Bhakti or divine love, she questioned him on intimate matters beyond his ken. He admitted his temporary defeat and asked for a month's grace. Committing his body to the care of his disciples, Śankara directed his consciousness into the corpse of King Amaraka, even then on its way to the funeral pyre. The mourners were overjoyed to see the King awake to life, and bore him back to his throne and Queen. A month later, the borrowed body of Amaraka knew the vivifying consciousness of Śankara no more, and the great sage returned to his own earthly habitation, met and answered the Sarasvatī whose questions had previously confounded him.

Out of this experience, Śankara wrote a famous treatise on that branch of astrological science dealing with the conception, evolution and reproduction of the human species under certain categorical conditions laid down by the ancient Ṛṣis. It expounds certain principles regarding the structure of the human organism, its mental and moral qualities, aesthetic, physical and psychological tendencies; interrelation of the sexes, and attraction and repulsion of persons born under various stars. Śankara also dealt with this subject in his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

He took final leave of his body in his thirty-second year, in the city of Kanchi. His disciple Ānandagiri describes the end thus: "As he was seated

he absorbed his gross body into the subtle and became Existence, then destroying this subtle one he became pure reason; then, attaining to the world of *Iṣvara* (the Personal God), with full happiness completed like a perfect circle, he passed on into the Intelligence which pervades the universe, and in this he still exists. The Brahmans of the place and his pupils and their pupils, reciting the Upaniṣads and *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Brahma-Sūtras*, then excavated a grave in a very clean place and making due offerings to his body raised a tomb." The unpolluted body of a Yogi, has long been considered to be beyond the need of the purifying funeral fire.

Some of the writings of Śankara have been made available to the Western world through the translations of Radha-krishnan, Max Muller and other scholars. An English translation by S. Venkataramanan, entitled—*Selected Works of Śrī Śankarāchārya*, (Natesan & Co., Madras), contains the famous *Century of Verses* by the great Vedantist. Some extracts from this work are given below.

Śankara pointed out that the study of Vedānta was not for everyone, but only for those who were filled with a true desire for emancipation. Such a man should have the following qualifications: (1) true discernment, an understanding of the difference between the transitory and the eternal, (2) desirelessness for rewards both in this world and the next, and (3) faith, concentration, self-control, patience, peace and longing for liberation.

EXTRACTS FROM ŚANKARA'S WORKS

"Spotless freedom from desires means dissatisfaction in respect of all

objects. Discrimination of the real means the determination that the nature of the self is eternal while all that is perceptible is otherwise. The constant eradication of mental impressions is called control of mind. The restraint of external activities is called control of body. Extreme abstention is the turning away from the objects of enjoyment. The endurance of all kinds of pain is called resignation, which is beneficial. Devoted belief in the sayings of the Vedas and of the teacher is called faith. The concentration of the mind on the Reality that is the ultimate goal is called balance. Desire for liberation is the name given to the intense thought, 'How and when, O Lord, shall liberation from the bonds of *Samsāra* (phenomenal existence) come to me?' Whoever desires his own welfare should, after acquiring the above-mentioned qualifications, commence the inquiry with a view to the attainment of knowledge."

"Knowledge cannot spring up by any other means than inquiry, just as the perception of things is impossible without light. "Who am I? How was this universe born? Who is its maker? What is its material cause?" This is the kind of inquiry referred to."

"Whatever is made of gold retains for ever the nature of gold. So, too, all that is born of Brahma is of the nature of Brahma."

"Just as one sees not the separate existence of the pot when he knows that it is clay, or the illusive existence of silver when he knows that it is mother-of-pearl, so, too, does one see not the condition of the individual soul when he knows Brahma. Just as a pot

is only a name of clay, and an ear-ring, of gold, so too is the individual soul a name of the Supreme."

"When the knowledge of the Reality has sprung up, there can be no fruits of past actions to be experienced, owing to the unreality of the body, in the same way as there can be no dream after waking. Action done in past lives is called Prārabdha. But that has no existence at all at any time, since past life is itself unreal. Just as the dream body is a mere illusion, so is this physical body also. How can an illusory thing have life, and how, if there is no life, can there be past action? As clay is the efficient cause of the pot, so is ignorance declared by the Vedānta to be the efficient cause of the universe. When that ignorance itself is destroyed, where then is this universe?"

"Without constant practice, the self that is pure existence and knowledge cannot be realized. Therefore, one who desired knowledge and seeks liberation should meditate on Brahma for a long time."

"The control of the senses (Yama), the control of the mind (Niyama), the avoidance of unreality (Tyaga), spiritual silence (Mauna), place (Deśa), time (Kāla), posture (Āsana), the subduing of the root-cause (Mūlabandha), the equipoise of the body (Deha-sāmya), the firmness of vision (Dr̥ksthiti), the control of life-forces (Prāṇayāma), the withdrawal of consciousness (Pratyahāra), the holding of consciousness (Dhāraṇā), self-contemplation (Dhyāna) and absorption (Samadhi)—these, in order are said to be the steps."

"One should see the cause in the effect, and should then eliminate the effect. The cause, as such, will vanish of its own accord. What then remains, that the sage becomes. For, one soon becomes that which he contemplates with extreme assiduity and absolute certainty. This should be understood by the illustration of the wasp and the worm."*

"Feeling, while going about, that he is a wave of the ocean of the self; while sitting, that he is a bead strung on the thread of universal consciousness; while perceiving objects of sense, that he is realizing himself by perceiving the self; while sleeping, that he is drowned in the ocean of bliss—he who, inwardly constant, spends his whole life thus is, among all men, the real seeker of liberation."

"Fire does not touch wet fuel even exceptionally, but only fuel that has been dried in the sun. So the fire of knowledge does not touch the mind that is wet with attachment, but only the mind that is dried with non-attachment."

"Water taken from the sea, when solidified, goes by the name of salt; when it is thrown back into the sea and is dissolved, it loses its name and form. So does the individual soul merge into the Supreme Self. At the same time, the mind is dissolved into the moon, speech into fire, sight into the sun, blood and semen into water, and hearing into the (four) directions."

"Compared with other means, knowledge is the only direct means to libera-

* A popular belief that the worm in the wasp's nest develops into a wasp by its constant expectation of the wasp's return.

tion. As cooking is impossible without fire, so is liberation impossible without knowledge. Ritual cannot dispel ignorance, because they are not mutually contradictory. But knowledge surely destroys ignorance, as light the densest darkness."

"One should separate the grain of the pure inner self from the chaff of the body and other sheaths by the threshing of reason."

"Passions, desires, happiness, misery, etc., exercise their function when the consciousness is present, and do not exist in deep sleep when the consciousness is absent. They belong, therefore,

to the consciousness and not to the self."

"The very nature of the self being knowledge, it does not depend, for a knowledge of itself, on any other knowledge, in the same way as a light does not require another light to reveal itself."

"The flame of knowledge that arises by the constant churning of meditation on the wood of the self will completely burn away the fuel of ignorance."

"Brahma being known, all this universe will become known, in the same way as all earthen jars, pots, etc., become known when the clay, which is their cause, becomes known."

Five Specifics for Self-Purification—III

Second Series

(Continued from the previous number)

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

SADĀCHĀRA, OR RIGHT CONDUCT

The second specific in the series is Sadāchāra, or right conduct. The term Sadāchāra denotes the way of life followed by the good and the wise, the way they point out to others as the right method of living, or the way worth being followed by good-natured men, the way by following which man becomes high and noble. The *Manusmṛti*, *Mahābhārata*, *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, *Nāradīya Purāṇa* and other scriptures give an elaborate account of what constitutes Sadāchāra or right conduct. He who is devoted to Sadāchāra comes to possess physical health, mental peace and clarity of thought and vision.

His mind gets purified within a short time. And a purified mind alone is capable of meditating on God. The Divine Presence is constant in such a mind. It is, therefore, incumbent on man to know what constitutes right conduct and how to observe it.

The great sage Manu says:—

"Right conduct as laid down by the Śrutiś and the Smṛtiś forms part of one's daily duties and is itself the root of Dharma and must, therefore, be scrupulously observed. By observing right conduct, one gets longevity, begets good progeny and acquires inexhaustible wealth. Not only this; right conduct removes the possibility of sudden and un-

timely deaths. He who is addicted to vices earns ill-fame, lives a life of suffering on earth, falls a prey to all sorts of diseases and gets a short life. A man possessing good character and faith and having no malice against anybody lives a happy hundred years, even though he may not be gifted with high intellectual qualities or learning.*"

In the present article an attempt is being made to bring out briefly what constitutes Sadāchāra according to the Smṛtis, Itihāsas and Purāṇas as well as authoritative books on medical science, with special reference to the needs of the present day. The learned reader is requested not to mind this intrusion on his time. He will kindly accept whatever he may find worthy of acceptance in the article and reap advantage from the same.

RISING FROM BED

It is good for all to rise early in the dawn, about three hours or at least an hour and a half before sunrise. Those who are accustomed to get up at that early hour grow always in health, wealth, knowledge, strength and energy. Those who lie in bed at the time of sunrise lose their longevity and vital power and become easy preys to all sorts of disease.

* श्रुतिस्मृत्युदितं सम्यङ् निवद्धं स्वेषु कर्मसु ।
धर्ममूलं निषेदेत् सदाचारमनिदितः ॥
आचाराछभर्ते शायुराचारादीप्सिताः प्रजाः ।
आचारादनमक्षयमांचारो हन्त्यलक्षणम् ॥
दुराचारो हि पुरुषो लोके भवति निन्दितः ।
दुश्खमाणी च सततं व्याधितोऽस्युत्वे च ॥
सर्वलक्षणाणीनोऽपि यः सदाचारवाच्चरः ।
प्रदृशानोऽनस्यम् शर्तं वर्णणि जीवति ॥

(Manu IV. 155—158)

The first thing one should do after rising from bed is to remember God and offer a prayer to Him for at least ten minutes. He should pray for strength so that he may be able to sustain his good thoughts and perform good deeds by mind and body and remember God constantly throughout the day. He should make a resolve in his soul to do only what is right, with constant remembrance of God, and not to commit any evil the whole day long.

ANSWERING CALLS OF NATURE

Leaving the bed, one should first urinate, and then wash the hands and rinse the mouth. People living in small towns and villages, where the sanitary arrangements are undeveloped, should walk to a distance from the residential quarters for the purpose of urination.

Every morning one should make it a point to drink slowly a tumblerful of cold water kept over-night. This is called Uṣapāna, the drink of dawn. It removes excess of phlegm, wind and gastric fire. All physical illness originate from the abnormal condition of these primary elements of the body. The practice of Uṣapāna promotes natural motion and remedies bowel-complaints. It also removes the cause of such diseases as piles, diabetes, headache, inflammation and insanity and promotes strength, intellect and vigour.

If possible, one should make it a point to go a long distance in the south westerly direction from the town or village for the purpose of answering the call of nature. Evacuation of the bowels should not be made under the shade of a tree or facing the cow, the sun,

the moon, the wind or in the presence of elders and men and women generally. Evacuation, again, should not be made on a ground tilled for cultivation, or where the crop is ripe, in a cattle-yard, street, lane, river, pond, reservoir of water, on the bank of a river or in a cemetery. If possible, one should evacuate with the face towards the north during the day and towards the south during the night. At the time of evacuation, the head should be covered with a piece of cloth and in the case of a twice-born, the ritual thread should be held round the ear.

People living in cities and towns should keep their latrines and urinals clean. The surrounding walls of brick or mat, as the case may be, should be smeared with tar all around, at least two feet from the bottom. They should be washed every day with plenty of water so that no dirty smell is left behind and flies may not make their settlement there.

One should form the habit of keeping the jaws closely pressed against each other during calls of nature. The habit makes the teeth strong and durable. One who forms this habit does not generally suffer from any form of tooth-disease.

After evacuation, the excrement should be covered with earth so that flies may be kept away from it. To dig a trench for excretion and fill it with earth is a very good practice.

Complete silence should be observed while answering calls of nature. Pressing the bowels too much is injurious. The pressure ejects the vital fluid and thereby aggravates constipation and causes a pain under the left rib which becomes

extremely distressing when it develops into a chronic malady. It affects the power of digestion and causes dyspepsia.

In case of constipation, one should eat plenty of green vegetables and take a little quantity of powdered myrobalan before retiring at night. The Pañcha-Sa-Kāra powder is also beneficial. But one should always guard against excessive use of purgatives. Frequent use of purgatives produces an adverse effect on the peristaltic motion. The Śikhā or tuft of hair on the head, should be untied at the time of attending nature's call.

The call of nature should be answered as a rule in the morning. It is a good habit to attend the call again in the evening. One should not be in a hurry to finish the process of evacuation.

One should not urinate on heated sand, fire, ashes, heated stone or in a place where a patient suffering from urinary diseases discharged his urine. Urine should not be passed in a standing posture. Care should be taken that drops of filthy water may not fall on any part of the body. After the discharge of urine, the organ should be washed with water.

The anus and the urinary organ must be cleaned by application of earth and washed with water. Those who clean the anus with earth after every call of nature do not as a rule suffer from piles. All bad smell should be removed through careful washing. A copious quantity of water should be used for this purpose. The anus cannot be properly washed with a small quantity of water. The rule is to wash the urinary organ with earth and water once and the

anus thrice after every call of nature. After washing the hands with earth and water, the water vessel also should be cleaned at least thrice with earth and water. No vessel used by another during call of nature should be used without being cleansed.

The earth of a serpent-hole or the hole of mice, earth taken from beneath water, the remnant of earth used after washing or earth applied to walls and floor of a house or dug out by ants and other little creatures, or the earth turned up by a plough should not be used for washing hands after the call of nature. The earth of a dirty place should be similarly avoided. The earth to be used must be pure and clean. The best earth can be secured by digging it out. If the earth is preserved in a heap inside the house, it should be kept in a vessel of earth or tin and under some cover, so that cats or other animals may not make it filthy.

Earth should be applied to the left hand ten times and to the right hand seven times, while washing hands after every call of nature.

CLEANING OF TEETH

The teeth should be cleaned by gently rubbing them with the smashed soft twig of a peepal, wild fig, Moulisiri, Champā, mango, Nīma or catechu tree. Twigs of the palm, betelnut, cocoanut, and other thorny trees are not used for this purpose. The twig should be without a knot and should measure twelve fingers in length. It must not be very thick. A very good tooth-powder can be prepared by mixing in equal quantity the powders of catechu, gall-nut, bark of Moulisiri,

Akalkārā, alum, rock salt, Sāmbhar, black salt, myrobalans, dry ginger, peepal and pepper. Rubbing the teeth and gums with mustard oil and rock salt makes the teeth strong and the gums healthy.

Brushing the teeth with a tooth-stick should be avoided by people suffering from diseases of the ear, mouth and teeth, bronchial patients, and patients suffering from heart-trouble. The first, sixth, ninth, eleventh and thirteenth lunar days of the Hindu calendar and all Sundays are prohibited for the use of a tooth-brush. Persons suffering from diseases mentioned above, and all persons on the prohibited days, should clean their teeth by rubbing them with either tooth-paste or tooth-powder.

The teeth should not be brushed while loitering. The brushing should be done in a peaceful mood, turning the face towards the east. After brushing, the tooth-stick should be split into two and the parts should be used for scraping the tongue. These scrapers should then be washed and thrown into a dust-bin or into a place reserved for throwing refuse. They should not be carelessly thrown anywhere.

After urination the mouth should be rinsed thrice and after evacuation eleven times. Cold and fresh water should be used in rinsing the mouth. Water which is either too hot or too cold should not be used, for it makes the gum weak and the teeth shaky. While gargling water should be held on the left side of the mouth's cavity. If the water is held either on the right side or in front, it invites illness and causes displeasure to the Pitṛs, the celestials and seers, who live in the vital world on the right and in front.

Gargling should be done in such a way that all parts of every tooth, the tongue and the gums may be perfectly cleaned. Gargling should not be done in a river or a tank.

WALK IN OPEN AIR

In the morning as well as in the evening, one should regularly walk in open, fresh and pure air. This should be done at one's ordinary pace and may be continued till one feels somewhat tired. Walking as an exercise and breathing of pure air are beneficial to health. This is, however, not recommended when a cold breeze or a wind-storm may be blowing or during rains, or if the place of walk is dirty.

THE PRACTICE OF RUBBING OIL

Rubbing the whole body with oil everyday is a very healthy practice. Parts of the body below the neck should be rubbed with mustard oil while sesame oil may be applied on the head. It is always good to keep the head cool and the feet warm. Mustard oil should, therefore, never be rubbed on the head. Oil should not be rubbed on the body on the eighth, eleventh, fourteenth, full moon and new moon days of the Lunar calendar, the day on which the sun moves from one zodiacal sign to another and also on Sundays. Mustard oil applied to soles of the feet, and, in case of an attack of cold, drawing such oil through the nostrils, are both very good practices.

BATH

Bath should be taken early in the morning before sunrise in the pure water of a running stream or in a tank of pure water, failing which one may take bath

by the side of a well with water drawn from it. If that, too, is not possible, one may use the fresh water from a pipe or get water brought from some well. Bath should always be taken with fresh water.

During bath the body should be rubbed perfectly well with hands and towel. While bathing one should think that along with impurities of the body, the impurities of the mind also are being washed away. The Name of God should always be remembered and repeated during bath. Fresh cool water is always good for bath in all seasons of the year. It is not advisable to use either stale water or excessively hot water for bath. During attacks of fever, diarrhoea and similar maladies, bathing is prohibited; while in cases of insanity, hysteria, etc., bath is indispensable. One should never take bath while the body is perspiring, or just after copulation, or after physical exertion like running, or immediately after taking meal. During bath put the water first on the head. Hot water bath in open air is injurious.

The tub or bucket used for bath by another should not be used without perfectly cleaning it with earth and water. Similarly, the pot used by another should be scoured and cleaned before use.

If there is a well in the house, it should be cleaned every now and then, so that the water may always remain pure. It is good to disinfect the water with Potassium Permanganate. No impurities should be allowed to accumulate around the well.

After bath, the body should be carefully rubbed dry with a Khaddar

towel. A second towel should be used for rubbing the lower part of the body. No part of the body should remain wet. People who neglect to dry the lower parts carefully generally become victims of ring-worm, itches and other skin diseases. A towel used by another should never be used.

The body should not be dried after bath with the wet Dhoti or only with the hands. The hair should not be beat or brushed in a standing posture, nor should Āchamana be taken while standing.

After rubbing the body dry, one should put on washed, pure and white, clothes. Woolen clothes or silk cloth produced without killing the silk-worm is good for use during worship. Clothes used by another should never be worn.

After bath, the hair should be properly combed so that any worm or particle of waste product may not remain there. Another's comb should not be used in cleaning the hair.

One should make obeisances every day to one's mother, father, teacher, elder brother and all elderly relatives. Long life, knowledge, success and power are gained by regularly bowing before them.

The forehead should be marked with sandal paste, Gopichandana, or Kunkum as sanctioned by the custom of the religious order to which one may belong.

SANDHYĀ AND WORSHIP

Every twice-born should perform Sandhyā three times a day. If that is not possible; performance twice a day is indispensable. A twice-born who fails to perform Sandhyā out of indolence is

regarded a great sinner and has to go through the dreadful agony of hell. The morning Sandhyā should be performed before sunrise and the evening Sandhyā before the stars begin to appear in the sky. After performance of Sandhyā, every twice-born should repeat the formula of Gāyatrī till at least a whole rosary of beads is counted.

Libations of water should be offered every day to the celestials, sages and manes for their satisfaction. To the celestials and sages this has to be done by three successive offerings at a time and to Prajāpati only once at a time. To the dead father and grand-father, the maternal grand-father and great grandfather, the mother and the grand-mother, the maternal grand-mother and great grand-mother, libations have to be offered towards the south and through Pitr-tirth, or the cavity beneath the thumb of the right hand. Libations should also be offered to the gods, demons, Yaksas, Nāgas, Gandharvas, Rāksasas, Piśāchas, Guhvakas, Siddhas, Kūṣmāṇḍas, birds and animals, aquatic creatures, earthly creatures, creatures living on air, creatures suffering the agonies of hell, friends and enemies of previous lives and to all beings who are suffering from hunger and thirst on earth.

One's own Deity should be worshipped every day with praises and prayers. Those who are not entitled to perform Sandhyā and repeat the formula of Gāyatrī should worship their own Deity every day regularly and offer him prayers and hymns. The eyes should be closed during prayer, and attempt should be made to concentrate the mind on the Deity to the best of one's ability.

FOOD

When the food is ready, the first duty is to offer Balivaiśwadeva, or oblations of food to all Deities by offering it to the fire. Then the guests present at the time should be fed with due respect. Then comes the turn of the married daughter, who may be present at the time, and thereafter the turn of pregnant women, men and women suffering from distress, the aged, and the children. The householder should take his food only after feeding them all. The *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* says: "He who takes food without feeding these, eats sin and is doomed, after death, to live a life of worm in hell living on phlegm. He who takes food without taking a bath eats filth. He who eats without repeating the sacred word for the appointed number of times drinks blood and pus. He who eats unsanctified food drinks urine and he who eats before feeding the children and the aged eats human dung."

Before taking food one must wash one's hands and feet and rinse the mouth perfectly well. The food should first be offered to God and then taken as a gift of grace from Him. Every time a man wants to eat or drink, he should first make an offering to God and then accept the sanctified food or drink. While eating one should maintain cheerfulness and observe silence, and masticate the food sufficiently and well. He who does not properly masticate his food weakens the teeth and compells the intestines to perform the function of the teeth. This weakens the gastric fire and causes indigestion. The right times for the two principal meals are about eleven in the morning and an hour

before or after sunset in the evening. Really speaking, a strong hunger and craving for food indicate the right time for food. When the time for taking food is properly regulated, one would naturally feel hungry at the appointed hour.

Food taken when the mind is cheerless, or when there is no taste for food, or when the hunger is too oppressive, is injurious to health. Similarly, food which is full of spices, acrid and pungent, is injurious. The quantity of food should not be so little that it cannot nourish the body, nor so large that the stomach cannot digest it.

Food should not be taken when one is very thirsty, when there is an urge of nature, when there is a pain in the stomach, or when one feels oneself generally unwell.

All the different tastes are necessary to make an ideal food, but the less sweets are taken the better.

Food should not be taken in an unholy place or sitting on a chair. The moment of sunset and insanitary surroundings should be similarly avoided. Tables made of cane should not be used as breakfast or dinner tables. Broken metallic plates should not be used. The habit of taking food in a metallic plate holding cups in the plate itself should be avoided.

A place which is free from dirt and bad smell, and has sufficient light and pure air, is the best place for taking food. The place should be surrounded on all sides. The cook, as well as he who serves food, must not belong to any of these categories of men—sinner, adulterer, backbiter,

patient carrying an infectious disease, affected with leprosy or itches, hot-tempered, inimically disposed, or full of grief.

The seat should be clean, and one should sit on it in an easy posture while taking one's food.

The place should be closed against all other than members of the family, friends and faithful servants.

The food prepared out of articles and money secured by theft, deceit, injustice to others, or exploitation of others should not be taken by any sane man.

While taking food there should be no anger, no expression of bitter word, no denunciation of the food, no weeping, no grief, no loud speaking and no touching of another.

Things which are too hot or too cold should not be allowed to touch the teeth. Bare salt should never be eaten. Sweet should be taken first, then brackish, then sour, and, lastly, the acrid and bitter tastes. Controlling speech one should eat only what is permissible. Food should not be spoken ill of.

It is good to eat in the beginning slices of fresh ginger with salt. Excessive eating for satisfaction of the palate is harmful.

Food which is excessively sour, pungent, acrid, rough and hot is Rājasic in character. Food which is half-cooked, tasteless, rotten, stale and remnant of another's plate is Tāmasic food. Rājasic and Tāmasic food, meat, alcohol and all food prohibited by the Śastras should be discarded. While eating, one should keep a towel on the left shoulder. Food should not be taken clothed only in a Dhotī covering the loins.

Two persons should not take food from a single dish, nor water and milk should be sipped from a cup touched by another's lips before it is carefully washed.

Food should not be taken in a lying posture. The habit of taking articles of food in one hand and eating with the other is not good. One should neither sit for meal on another's seat nor take food with somebody in the lap. Food should not be taken on a cot. Food should not be taken in a house where a corpse may be lying. The plate of food should not be placed lower than the seat. The better course is to place it a little higher.

A preparation of sesame seed should not be taken after sunset. Milk should not be taken with salt. Sour articles should not be eaten from a brass vessel. Plates and cups of bell-metal and clean green leaves are best for serving food.

One should observe the vows of food-restraint on the eleventh, fourteenth, full moon and new moon days of the Hindu calendar. Restraint in respect of the usual food on these days should not mean over eating of sweets and milk-products. The days should be passed either by observing complete fast or on light fruitarian diet.

Food touched by a woman in her menses or partaken of by a bird, food touched by a dog or smelt by a cow, food which contains hair, nail, insects, saliva or spittle, food obtained by suffering insult, food given by a prostitute, a brewer, an ungrateful person, a butcher or a king should not be eaten.

Men and women should not eat together. Food should not be taken in a place where women are eating, or otherwise sitting unconcerned about the surrounding. All cooking utensils should be perfectly scoured and cleaned.

Milk should not be taken in a copper vessel. Boiled milk should be always kept under cover.

(To be continued)

One of St. Columban's Sermons

By WOLFRAM H. KOCH

St. Columban, the author of the following sermon, was one of the mightiest figures of early Irish Christian mysticism. He left Ireland and his monastery of Bangor for the continent about A. D. 590 to become the evangelizer of Upper Germany.

St. Columban stressed the ascetic side in his own life, and frequently withdrew into the deep recesses of the then almost unapproachable forests of the Vosges Mountains. There he dedicated himself completely during long periods to solitary study, prayer, contemplation, and extreme bodily austerities and mortification.

In his own thought he was very independent and even fought the authority of the Pope in Rome. After having been banished from the monastery of Luxeuil in the Vosges he went to Upper Alemania and wandered through Zurich to Arbon on Lake Constance and thence to the old town of Bregenz, spreading the doctrine and rules of the early Irish Christianity everywhere. In his monastic rule he was very severe and prescribed for instance an average of eighty Psalms for the daily Choral Prayer, a number never again demanded. The following translation of a part of one of the four original sermons to his fellow-monks which are still extant, shows the manliness and spiritual penetration of this mighty personality of the early days of Christianity in the centre and West of Europe.

"A good conscience is the praise of the life we are leading. What does the pure mind teach us to love? Certainly that which has created Love and all else, which lasts eternally and never ages. If we care for truth, we should not love anything outside except the Eternal and the eternal Will which is penetrated and brought to life by the Eternal: the Miraculous, Unspeakable, Invisible, Incomprehensible, which fills all and surpasses all, is beyond all, is ever present and ever withdraws itself from all. The sage shall not love anything here, because here nothing endures. For yonder are the eternal things with the Eternal and here are the transitory things eternally bound up with mortality. That is why it is dangerous to dwell in the deceptive and in the wrong, where the true which should be loved is not seen, but the untrue with its transitoriness entices us and seduces us to succumb to its deceptive dream. That which really deserves hatred, seductively smiles at us. That which we are to love, even if it did not exist, hides itself from us. He who dwells only among deceivers, must live in continual anxiety. He escapes them only if he flees from them and exercises the greatest possible care. But how can we who are in the world, flee from the world which we are not to love? We are asked to be dead to it, and yet we hold that which we should trample under our feet clasped tightly to our innermost in ardent desire. He tramples the world under his feet, who conquers himself, who dies to his vices

sooner than his nature does, dies in mind sooner than in body. For no one who spares himself in any way can ever hate the world, for it is in himself only that he loves or hates the world. He who has died to the lusts of the body has nothing of the world left that he could love. Let us die this death, because bodily death is the fate of all, this death of but few. For but few live as if they died daily, and yet everyone should live as if death met him daily, because he has not been always in the world, nor will be in it always, but dwells in it only for a short time, so that he may think of the Eternal wherein, if he deserves it, he shall exist eternally and in a heavenly manner in future. That which was before the world, shall be also after the world and everlasting. It is so now too, but it does not become visible and is so veiled from us that it is forbidden to man to speak thereof. For into the heart and into the ears of man it does not enter human eyes cannot behold it. O what, a painful situation! That which we should love is so distant from us and so uncertain and unknown that as long as we are men, and limited by this imprisonment of the body, we wholly lack the power to hear and to think and to behold that which is truly good and eternal. What shall we do then? Let us love and seek the unknown in order that we may not lose it and remain unknowing forever. For vainly has that man been born who ever remains ignorant of the Everlasting, who never experiences anything of that Eternal! Oh, wretched man! What thou seest, thou art to hate; and what thou shouldst love, thou knowest not. Thy life is a snare. Thou stumblest whether thou wilt or not. In

thee thou bearest what fetters thee. What frees thee is denied to thee. Wilt thou guard thyself against thyself and not trust in thyself, as thou thyself puttest snares around thee, but dost not free thyself? Wilt thou suffer thyself to be blinded with open eyes and to be tied and willingly wend thy way to death? Oh unbearable blindness! Oh pain without example! Oh most unfortunate misery! to care for the enemy, to deliver oneself into the hands of the ruthless persecutors and to agree with those gladly and joyously who put us in chains and give us over to death! Who girds his loins for death with gladness, who likes to be led to execution? Woe to thee, unfortunate mankind, if only thou wert stabbed or beheaded, but not eternally crucified! Who is blinder than thou in thy misery? Who errs seeing as thou seest? As far as the sky thy gaze reaches but no further. On this side thou art wise, on that side a fool. Thy callousness mocks all arms, thy ignorance all instruction. Who will tell thee what cannot be told? Who shall rescue thee out of thy misery?"

The above sermon belongs to one of the oldest documents of Christian mysticism on Germanic soil and still shows the intimate connection with pre-Christian Druidic mysticism in the elevating self-assured language of the saint. On his way to the lake of Constance St. Columban was accompanied by some fellow-monks, three of whom remained behind on what is now Swiss territory. It is from their solitary cells in the wildness of the forests that the monasteries of St. Ursanne, St. Gallen and Disentis later developed and were to become leading

centres of learning and mystic theology during the highest bloom of Mediaeval mysticism in the Germanic countries. We know but little of these early Irish missionaries who wandered over long tracts of deserted land and brought culture and learning to the scattered Germanic tribes of that day, although we still see the traces of their powerful self-denying personalities and their civilizing influence in many a place in Central Europe. But there is no doubt

that the influence of the old Druidic traditions of their forefathers coupled with the new mighty impulse of the message of Christ, unfettered and undistorted as it still was at that time, gave them the power and the spiritual realization which alone make such lasting work possible and which alone contribute effectively to the spiritual atmosphere from which mankind can draw its inspiration for higher and truer values of life.

The Song of the Atman

“On Myself”

[With Pure Ego]

(Seen through different moods and planes)

BY SRI PADMANABHA

(1)

(3)

“Who am I? Where am I? What am I? Whence am I?” My dear child, there is in reality no ‘I’ to know itself. But there is One which knows not even itself. You are surely that. There can be no doubt about this.

(2)

Is not this myth of the universe around me wonderful? Is not my presence in this tiny planet with an individuality still more wonderful? My individuality is such that it transcends your very conception of everything. Though in a small human form with possibly a name to point out, to all intents and purposes of your own, nobody can define me and my universe. You may open your hands wide and say in your most powerful attempt that it is all mystery. Yes; mystery!

I am neither master nor mistress or anything else. Yes; the fun is that I don’t know how to describe myself. You may counterask me as to who you yourself are. Don’t think that I don’t know you. I will readily reply that I am you and that you are me. I will further say that there is no such thing like I or you but only *One* indescribable.

(4)

Don’t imagine that I am here only. I am everywhere not only in spirit but also in forms; no, even in names. Know me to be That pervading everywhere.

(5)

This is one of the many bodies I now possess. Hence I cannot think of it seriously—no, even with some concern. Let it remain as it is. Why should the king care about a particular coin in his

treasury? Is it not enough that he knows lots and lots of coins to be in his possession?

(6)

By some wonderful current working from beneath this One indescribable, there is apparent diversity on the surface, just like the waves on the bosom of the vast ocean. This diversity is but apparent but it cuts monotony to pieces.

(7)

Though I am indescribable to myself even, I take many forms and names and sport on the stage of my world which is of course my own creation. Once, I don't know when, I assumed the form of a musician and sang many songs to a particular note. My song became the myriads of stars and constellations whirling their way in the vast space. Even my note is there with undiminished rhythm. See and hear. My songs are there around your tiny speck which you call your world. They are in many forms and names and there is also the same note strung through them. In a clear night, with a calm mind, look around you and above you. You will verily know that I am the master musician himself.

(8)

To be sure, in the beginning, there was nothing. But afterwards something came out. Whence could it have come out? Verily, something came out of that nothing. Child, with a calm mind think over this.

In the bottom of your mind untouched by it, of course, there is that nothing out of which came this something. Hence when your thinking over this issue becomes very subtle, you will know in a

flash the truth of something having come out of nothing in those days.

(9)

I proclaim that I am everywhere. How and in what form? Since this all is mine, there is no wonder in my being everywhere. But as for the form, I assume a subtle form and seat myself in you all, as the very source of your mind, but untouched by it. You compose your mind and see with very great force and courage the origin of it. You will surely come to me. I will be visible for your feeling only *then*. Not till then.

(10)

Oh, do you ask me why you are not like me? I am not at fault and I am not blameworthy. I never feel you at all and I am not blameworthy. I never feel you at all because you are not apart from me. I only feel myself; in that I also feel you. You think that I am apart from you and here is the fun of it. Don't think you are not me. If you leave that fun, you will lose yourself but gain *myself* and become that One indescribable *in me*.

(11)

Out of me, I issued a wonderful force called *mind* to pervade everywhere like myself. From what has occurred since then, I now feel that I was, during my issuing forth this great mind, extremely *feminine* in stuff. That is why this mind, my daughter, while pervading everywhere has controlled everything like a well-attired, fair-limbed woman controlling everything in her domain. The very husband is submissive to her! So also, this cunning lady of the mind has since then everything under her sway. Everywhere I have now become only secondary in importance. The first place has been

knocked from me by my own part called the mind.

(12)

Mind not only controls everything but also produces many changes on each that falls under her charms. She has become very vigorous and her charms have grown quite irresistible. Though she is really my daughter, she is now acclaimed by one and all in my house to be my very wife and partner in life ! They say that I sport with her amorously. No. I never sport with her, my daughter. Since I know the limit of her power I keep quiet. Let her play as she likes in my house !

(13)

Of her own accord, mind does little play. She wants a partner to play with. For this, she once ran to me with tears in her large, dark eyes and begged of me a boy of her equal age to play with. That was how the boy of ignorance created. Mind plays with ignorance to her tastes and fancies.

You see ignorance cannot say anything contrary to the wishes of the mind because he is a poor play-boy solely created for the charming fair-dressed girl of the mind. She is to command and he is to obey.

(14)

The charming mind and her docile play-boy of ignorance roam about this world of mine as they please. Since they are my children, they have the pervasive power too. They have pervaded everywhere just as I. The fun of the world has become still more funny. In the place of one, you have got three.

(15)

The created has moved apart from the Creator. The preserved has moved

apart from the Preserver. The destroyed has moved apart from the Destroyer. You know the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer to be that *One* indescribable. You further know that the created, preserved and destroyed to be one that sprang up from the *One* indescribable. Such being the case, how has the little one moved apart from the big one ? It has moved apart for all practical purposes because of the intervention of the mind and her play-boy of ignorance.

(16)

The original simple fun of this world has become still more funny when mind and ignorance have appeared on the stage. You don't nowadays see the origin of all and dive deep into the great mystery and thereby lose your petty self.

What you see is the surface which has a charming appearance but a rotten core. You see the fine red apple but not the poisoned worm inside. Verily, verily, you are trifling with the apparent diversity of this world.

You diverge from and not converge on that *One* indescribable which has become all these simply for fun.

(17)

Have you ever seriously asked yourself, child, as to who you are *really* ? Do you know whence you have come ? Do you know where you will go ? Do you know what is meant by birth ? Do you know anything about life ? What do you think of death ?

Three things all of the same source pervade you. They are the mind, ignorance and the great *One* indescribable. By some trick inexplicable, you (*s. e.*, the little self) cast your vote in favour of the first two, *viz.*, mind and ignorance.

Your representatives become your masters in due course and though they live in your body, control you and the body too. They play as they like in your house. They keep you in the background. They don't allow you to see their as well as your *Father* within. You are simply their slave.

They give you births, various sorts of life, and deaths. When once you give them your vote, Time alone can take away power from them. The more your faith in them, the longer will it take for you to meet your Father within.

If on the other hand, you cast your lot with the great One indescribable, nothing shall go wrong and all will be well and you will be always in the Kingdom of the Father within you.

(18)

Apparent diversity is the uniform worn by this world of mine which is no other than a projection of my own *Self*. Uniformity is behind this apparent diversity. This diversity is simply a smile on my face. And out of fun I have made you all in my world and out of fun I keep you all and destroy you all out of fun itself.

Where this is all *fun* to me, this all is the very great thing for you, my children. Remember that ye are my children and nothing shall be withdrawn from you. You shall inherit all that is mine.

(19)

At times, I pose through a ray of mine as though I am one like you. A pot of water posing like a cup of water! I take up a form and name like you, my children, and live among you as your teacher. Remember your heavenly Father

becomes your earthly Teacher! Since all this is fun to me, I don't attach any value to what you do to me when I act as your Teacher. I simply teach you and pack off!

In olden days, one among you was Arjuna and I taught him to remember me always and carry on his work. "Act with a pure mind as my tool without caring for the results thereof" is what I taught you through him at Kurukṣetra. By doing my bidding, you are sure to come to me, that One indescribable.

Sometimes after that I came as Sankara and taught you, my beloved children, the very Truth itself. "This is all my own fun! You are not different from me. We are one; we are one. There are no twos. There is only One indescribable." I taught you then gently and wisely but most powerfully.

After that I posed as though I were my own son. I took up a human form and had it named Jesus. I lifted up my voice at Jerusalem. I pleaded my own case. I pleaded for my Father in Heaven. I then explained to you that the Father in Heaven is within you and that as a corollary the Kingdom of Heaven is in you yourself. I wound up my teaching with stating the Oneness of the Father and mine own Self. I cursed you, begged you and showed superhuman powers to transform you. I lost that body like a criminal for the simple 'fault' of my teaching you the Truth in the most glaring manner. Anyhow that end was not against my will.

Some centuries later I taught you from Mecca. You drove me with stones. I never left my job. I carried it to the end. I taught you the Truth.

To be short, I never allow my work stagnate. Collectively and individually, I appear to you in the role of your Teacher, in all parts of the world whenever I like so.

Know me to be there as a teacher where there are courage, fearlessness and majestic vibrating voice rising up against ignorance and cowardice.

(To be continued)

The Lament of Vishnupriya

By WANDERER

For a proper appreciation of the Lament of Viṣṇupriyā, the reader has to know or remember the renunciation of Nimai of Nadia, or Śrī Gourāṅga, afterwards known as Śrī Krishna-Chaitanya Deva. Born in an orthodox Brahman family of devout parents, versed in all the Śāstras when he was in his teens and beating many of the best Pañdits of the time in Sastric duels in a place like Nadia which was a great seat of learning, he was possessed by the conviction that society had very much deteriorated inspite of all the Sastric lore and culture and that salvation lay in devotion and Harināma. He therefore began to preach his doctrine of love, organized Sankīrtana and sang Harināma in the streets of Nadia, with a number of select followers. The Pañdits were seized by alarm at this attempt to propound Bhakti Rasa which they thought was going to retard the culture of knowledge and obstruct its path (Jñāna-mārga). They rose in revolt against him. The populace jeered. Some abused, others assaulted. He was taken as a fraud or one deluded. He knew no end of persecution. He felt that the time was not yet ripe for the belief to take root that all knowledge was fruitless without the blend of devotion, that sincerest devotion alone

was sufficient for salvation, that it did not lie in austerities and sufferings, nor in rites and rituals,—but in this Kaliyuga there was no other way to it for man than 'Harināma' taken with true devotion wherever he might be,—in the deep forest or in a crowded town,—in the meanest hamlet or in a prince's palace. He, therefore, like prince Siddhārtha of old, left his hearth and home in the dead solitude of a night, dedicating his young and beautiful wife, Sri Viṣṇupriyā, sleeping her innocent sleep, to the care of Śrī Kṛṣṇa above and mother Sachi Devi below,—and became a Sannyāsī, shaving his head clean and donning the saffron robe. In this forced life of his, he bore unending sufferings so that even thus, man might rise on the steps of Harināma and be yet saved.

* * *

The scene is Nadia on one bank and Kulia on the other, the Ganges flowing between. Five years have passed since Śrī Gourāṅga Deva had taken Sannyāsa during which he had travelled in other parts of India, preaching his doctrine of love and bearing all the hardships and privations of a Sannyāsī. After five years he has reappeared in Kulia because he had promised his mother, "I shall come again".

It is morning time. Thousands of people, male and female, are, according to age-old custom, bathing at both banks in the bright sunshine of the East.

Śrī Gourāṅga's old mother, Sachi Devi, has come to bathe at the Nadia ghat, accompanied by Viṣṇupriyā, her daughter-in-law. From across the river they hear "Haribol" "Haribol" shouted by thousands and thousands gathered on the Kulia bank. They extend their gaze

across. Śrī Gourāṅga's tall figure looms high above the crowd. Viṣṇupriyā's eyes catch the sight of that unforgettable figure. It takes her not even a second to know whose the figure is and what the large crowd are about. She is seized by grief at the sight of her lord in the garb of a Sannyāsi, bearing all the sufferings inseparable from the life of one as such. Unable to endure the scene, she burst forth thus:

(The Lament)

"Mother dear, catch hold of me, or else I fall.
Why at all didst thou bring me to this Ganges bank ?
Behold Kulia across the water, feeding thy eyes fully,
Where lacs of men are thronged,
Shouting 'Haribol' around a figure tall.
Why is it mother ? Canst thou the secret tell
Why lacs of men are dancing, crying 'Haribol',
Shaking the earth below and rending the skies above ?
Methinks thy son shines forth there;
For, dost thou not see that tall and gracious figure,
Who could it be but thy son and my Lord,
My own supremest for ever ?
His lotus feet—
The sinner and the sick have reached;
Deprived of them,
Stands Viṣṇupriyā alone, bereaved;—
Jeered by her mates as a gross misfit,
Or shunned and forsaken as a thing diseased.

If such was the lament of Viṣṇupriyā as the 'chief mourner' equally poignant was the grief of thousands others in Nadia, including those who had at one

Was it to give me, his servant maid,
Her punishment due,
God hath in him appeared
To purge this Yuga ?
Take me mother, take me away
From this plaintive place,
Take me with my downcast face
Hidden in thy apron's end;
For, powerless I am to bear the sight;
Whom shall I tell my woes ?
On his person of golden hue,
A loin cloth he hath donned;
Once more near us he hath been drawn,
Mother, by thy love alone.
Endless sufferings he hath lifelong borne;
Bring him home, mother,
Now bring him to his own !
Sayeth Sadhu Balaram Das :—
"My heart is rent
To view this scene;
For man's sorrows and sins
My Lord's are sufferings these;
Shame on thee, man, shame on thee,
'Tis thou who hast brought it to be,—
This penance of thy dearest Friend,
—And shot an arrow through me !"

time scoffed and scorned, when the light which had illumined Nadia had suddenly extinguished. But they had lived to be reclaimed. The tears of Viṣṇupriyā

and of others bereaved, washed away sins.

Life's span is brief. The road is long and yet short. The alleys and labyrinths are many. Men are privileged to receive according to merits earned. Those who are born with higher deservings may seek the dizzy heights. But for the great millions, the plain and humble road is the one shown by Śrī

Krishna-Chaitanya,—the one who flourished only about 450 years ago as Śrī Kṛṣṇa awakened in himself and the awakener of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in others. There is need for his teachings being propagated and kept alive. They do not drive you into the depths of forests relinquishing your hearth and home, nor require you to be versed in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. They prescribe a simple potion sweet as nectar.

Letter to a Fellow-Seeker

Everything for Worship of God

DEAR BROTHER,

Excepting God, everything in the world is painful. If whatever we enjoy here is real, it is only a drop in the sea of Divine Bliss. If it is unreal, it is nothing but sorrow in disguise. The apparent joy conceals the sorrow, as a poisoned sweet prepared to kill somebody conceals the poison in it.

All relations are derived from the one relation with God. All love and beauty are likewise derived from one Love Divine. Without God the world is dreadful, threatening to kill and devour all from all directions. To regard all these objects of the world without any reference to their relation with God, as 'mine' and as sources of happiness, is what is called ignorance. The Lord has declared these objects to be so many "wombs of grief", no matter whether they are meant for an individual or collectively for the whole world. He

who desires these objects not for himself, but collectively for all, is surely a high-minded soul, but nevertheless he is in error. For had he not been in error, he could not have perceived happiness in 'the womb of grief'. Without turning away from sense-pleasures, no real growth of Divine Love is possible. So long as the mind is full of the impure love for sense-objects, the seed of true love can never grow in it. To speak of the growth of Divine Love in that case is a far cry, for even the seed of Love cannot be sown in such a mind. When the mind is purified by means of detachment, then only can the seed of Divine Love be sown in it and made to sprout, grow and fructify. But an impure mind is incapable of detachment. Purity comes from the practice of Bhajana, from constant remembrance of God. One should, therefore, take to the practice of Bhajana and grow in detachment by means of contemplation and prayer. Once Divine Love manifests itself, all

worldly enjoyments will pale into insignificance and look insipid and sordid. The mind will then naturally turn away from them. Nāgaridās, the great devotee-king of Kissengarh, had some inkling of Divine Love when he composed and sang the following poem which begins with an outburst of repentance for his past life:—

"What a long past is lost without
Brindaban !
In vain have passed all days I lay
wrapped in royal mirth.
Instead of the holy bank and the bed
of flowers, on arrows of pain and
suffering I lay my head to sleep.
I cared not to see the single-minded
loving devotees merged in love, but
looked eagerly to the faces of re-
volting damsels.
I walked not in places which the
Divine Charmer frequented but
sowed obstinately the seed of
misfortune.
In the inn of wrangle I resided and
the inkeeping damsel Māyā beguiled
me.
Leaving the abode of everlasting
bliss, I lived there to laugh and
weep at intervals.
Instead of doing my duty by my-
self I took up and carried on my
head the burdens of others.
Not a particle of happiness I ever
had in all my wandering in many
lands.
But since I came and dwelt in this
bower, I have been living a con-
tent life, indeed."

He has drawn the true picture of a king's happiness, but it is realized only when one is freed from the ensnaring web of sense-enjoyments.

I do not mean to say that one should renounce one's hearth and home. For wherever one may go, one is always

liable to be caught in the trap of sense-enjoyments so long as attachment for worldly objects continues to sway his mind and heart. Everyone has to live in his own world, and face his own field of action, whether big or small. The Emperor expresses his likes and dislikes in imperial affairs, a shopkeeper expresses them in business and a child with regard to its toys. All are unhappy, all are suffering from grievances; none is satisfied with his conditions, and in that fact lies centred all the suffering and hatred of the world. None need, therefore, leave his hearth and home, but all should renounce the sense of being the possessor or owner of the hearth and home. All possessions should be given over to God and God should be installed in every home as its rightful owner. Every home should be transformed into a temple of worship and the residents into worshippers. All our attachment should be directed to God, and none to the home or its belongings. Men and things in the house may be loved as belongings of God. But when they do not serve the purpose of worship, "Let all these relations, parents, brothers and friends, all possessions, wealth, residence and objects of joy perish in fire, if they are no help to me in my approach to the feet of God." For, says the same poet, "It is no collyrium, which injures the eye."

As the home belongs to God, even so the world belongs to God. With this attitude of mind we have to live in the world and do its works. We have to do whatever work God allots to us. Attaching ourselves to God, we have to work out his will, whether it leads to

construction or destruction. What we have to constantly remember is this. There is no happiness in sense-enjoyments. Happiness lies only in God. It is wrong to think that the world will be happy if it is provided more and more with things of sense-enjoyment. True happiness of the world lies in seeking the secret of God. It matters little whether we are endowed with worldly possessions, or not. If we possess them,

and God is willing to keep them with us, let them be there. The real thing is not worship of these possessions, but worship of God. We have to make an offering of these things to Him, and not seek them from Him.

Bless me, therefore, older as you are than me, that I may lay myself down at the Lord's feet, and carry out his biddings, constantly remembering and uttering His name.

Grace of God

Just as a mother with sweet, pious face,
Yearns towards her little children from her seat,
Gives one a kiss, and another an embrace,
Takes this upon her knees, that on her feet;
And while from actions, looks, complaints, pretences,
She learns their feelings and their various will,
To this a look, to that a word dispenses,
And whether stern or smiling, loves them still.

So Providence for us, high, infinite,
Makes our necessities its watchful task,
Hearks all our prayers, helps all our wants,
And even if it denies, what seems our right,
Either denies because it would have us ask,
Or seems but to deny, and in denying grants.

* * *

"Seems but to deny, and in denying grants."

How true, how elegant, and how grand this idea is ! This may be said with equal truth of the all-merciful God, of a generous master, of a kind parent, and an affectionate lover.

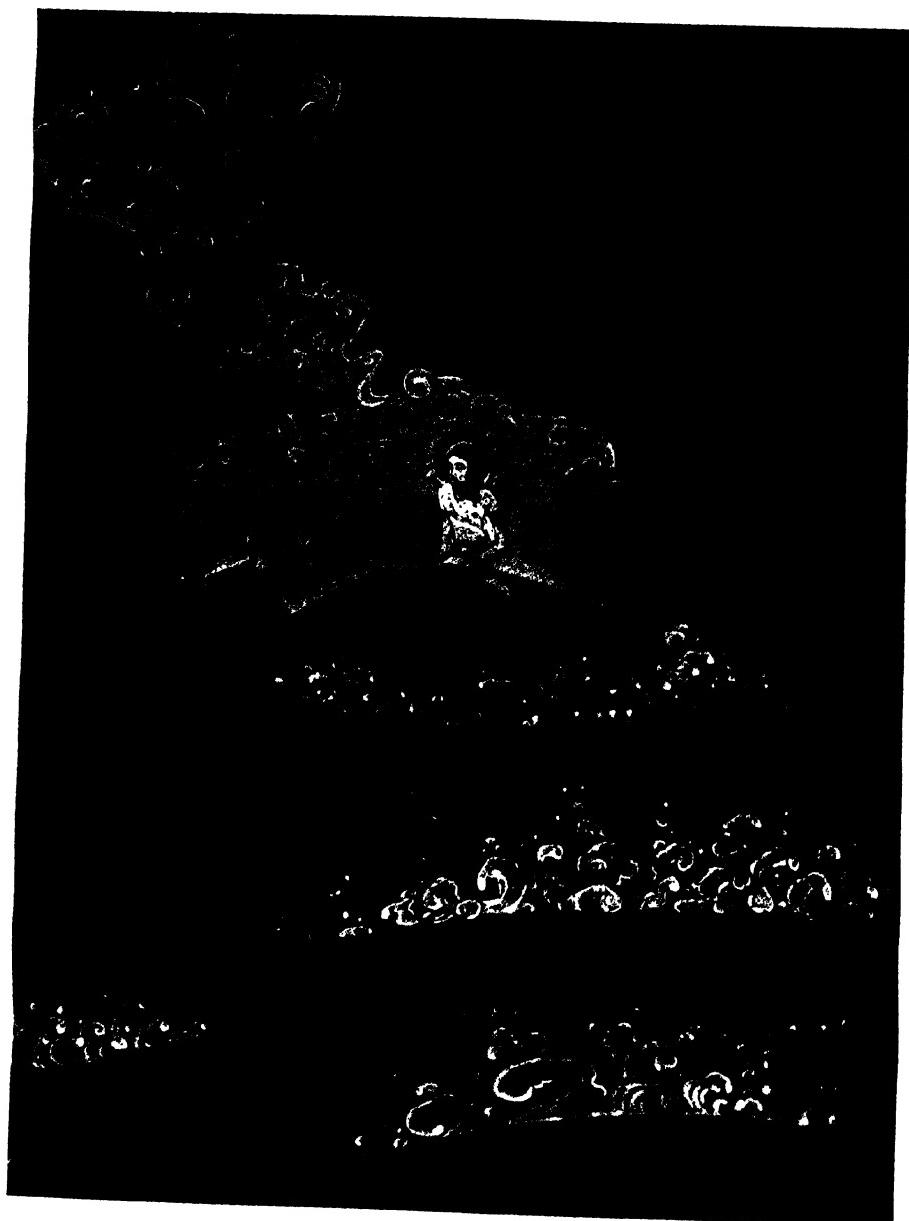
God, Master, Parent and Lover often but seem to deny prayers, but really do grant them.

In this way of granting here is unquestionably a grace, a nobility, a generosity and a sweetness which make the gift all the more welcome, all the more appreciable, all the more pleasurable and all the more unforgettable.

—C. S. Rao.



The Kalyana-Kalpataru



The Divine Tortoise

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते



KRISHNA K

KRISHNA

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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श्रुते आन्धमन्दमन्दरगिरिग्रावाग्रकण्डयना-
निद्रालोः कमठाकृतेर्भगवतः श्वासानिलाः पान्तु वः ।
यत्संस्कारकलानुवर्तनवशाद् वेलानिभेनाम्भसां
यातायातमतन्द्रितं जलनिधेनर्दीपि विश्राम्यति ॥

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavata XII. xiii.*)

"May we be protected by the breaths of the glorious Lord in the form of a tortoise inclined as it were in sleep, being scratched and soothed by the ends of the rocks of the Mount Mandara which rapidly turned on His back! On account of the still unexhausted impetus communicated by the turning of the Mount Mandara the constant rise and fall of the waters of the sea in the form of waves have to this day continued without a pause."

The Synthesis of Hindu Philosophy and Religion in the Bhagavata

By K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

My aim in this essay is to show how *Bhāgavata*, like the *Bhagavadgītā*, is a scripture of Synthesis, and that we should add it to the *Upaniṣads* and *Brahma-Sūtras* and *Gītā* and talk of Prasthāna-Chatuṣṭaya and not merely of Prasthāna-Traya, because it is as valuable and inclusive and inspired and inspiring as they. It is regarded mainly as a scripture of devotion (*Bhakti*), but just as *Bhakti* is a vital element in all the Mārgas, whereas it is the *alpha* and the *omega* in the path of devotion, even so the *Bhāgavata* is a vital element in the comprehension of the other three Prasthānas.

It is a strange fact that Nārada is as much the inspirer of the *Bhāgavata* as of the *Rāmāyaṇa*—of the path of devotion as of the path of righteous work. He is thus the Guru of Valmiki and Vyāsa as also of Dhruva and Prahlāda. He is also said to have learnt Jñāna from Sanatkumāra. He is a link between God and man for all time. There is a tradition current in South India that he gave the musical treatise *Svarāṅgava* in a dream to the saint and master-musician Tyāgarāja and inspired him to lead a life full of the music of devotion and filled with devotion to music.

What is devotion (*Bhakti*)? It is defined and described well in Nārada's *Bhakti-Sūtras* and Śāṇḍilya's *Bhakti-Sūtras*, but it is best described briefly in

the *Gītā* and elaborately in the *Bhāgavata*. In the words of Lord Jesus, it is love of God "with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind". Nārada calls it Parama Prema (Supreme Love of God). Śāṇḍilya calls it Parānuraktirīṣware (Supreme longing for God). The longing is so great that no other attainment can be regarded as in any way coming near the attainment and realization of God. It is supreme and unbroken love (अनन्यविच्छिन्नानुरागः). No other rewards can tempt him; no sufferings can frighten him or dim his devotion. He sees his Beloved everywhere and so has no desire or hatred for anyone or anything. Such love is the negation of all desire. God so fills the heart that there is no room in the heart for any desire including even the desire for Mokṣa (liberation). It is a supernatural, selfless, evercrescent, unbroken, subtle, sweet experience.

'गुणरहितं कामनारहितं प्रतिक्षणवैर्धमानमविच्छिन्नं
प्रक्षमतरमनुभवरूपम् !'

(*Nārada-Bhakti-Sūtra*. 54)

It is of the nature of supreme peace and supreme bliss (शान्तिरूपात् परमानन्दरूपात्). It does not mean the abandonment of Karma but the sublimation of it by doing it in a spirit of desirelessness (Niṣkama) and by way of obedience to His Law and in a spirit of resignation and of love-offering to Him (Śrī Kṛṣṇārpaṇam).

But even such Karma is but the unripe fruit, the ripe fruit being Kṛṣṇa-Prema (प्रित्यभक्तपूर्वकं नित्यदासनित्यकान्ताभावनात्मकं वा प्रेमैव कार्यं प्रेमैव कार्यम्). Nitya Śānti is good; Nitya Dāsyā is better; Nitya Sakhya is yet better; Nitya Vātsalya is even better yet; and Nitya Mādhurya is best of all. The *Bhāgavata* teaches us that such Bhakti is better than all the five forms of Mukti, viz., Sālokya, Sāmīpya, Sārṣṭi, Sārūpya and Sayujya. It is superior even to Kaivalya. Nay, Mukti is the slave (Dāsī) of Bhakti and comes and goes at her command.

It is not a correct reading of the *Bhāgavata* to describe it as being only a scripture of devotion (Bhakti). It shows us the point of incandescence wherein Niṣkāma Karma (selfless work) flames into Dhyāna (meditation) and Bhakti (devotion) and Jñāna (wisdom). The *Bhāgavata* enables us to realize the essential synthesis of Adwaitic and Visistadwaitic and Dwaitic concepts. He who tries to twist it into this or that mould does it a great injustice. The Dwaitic and Visistadwaitic and Adwaitic views therein are but different aspects of envisaging Reality. The *Gitā* affirms this great truth when it says:

शनयहेन चाप्यन्ये यजत्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वोमुखम् ॥

'Others, i.e., Jñānayogis, through their offering of Knowledge, worship Me as Brahma, the absolute and formless, identifying everything with Me as the One; and others, who worship through different forms of Devas, taking Me to be many and various in forms, also worship Me in My Universal Form.'

(IX. 15)

Diversity and multiplicity (Bheda) are the verdict of the senses; we do not need scripture to tell us such a petty and obvious fact. When the mind does not inter-relate things, it sees diversity. When it inter-relates things to one another and to itself and to the ultimate Cause, it realizes unity in diversity. When it merges in the Cause itself, it realizes unity. Thus all the types of realization are affirmed in the Upaniṣads and the *Gitā* and the *Brahma-Sūtras* and the final summation of all of them is the *Bhāgavata* which is the Turiya Mūrti including the Trimūrti of the Prasthāna-Traya.

What is the real meaning and value of spirituality? It enables us to realize the innermost Reality of the cosmos as a whole and as a correlation of parts. Such Reality when viewed in itself is Akhaṇḍa Satchidānanda. This is called the Swarūpa Lakṣaṇa. When viewed in relation to the universe, it is called God or Iśwara. This is called the Taṭastha Lakṣaṇa. Iśwara Himself when viewed in His aspect of immanence is called Paramātmā, and when viewed in His aspect of transcendence is called Bhagavān. When viewed in His aspect of Law, He is called Iśwara, the Father of the Universe. When viewed in His aspect of Love or Grace, He is regarded as Iśwari, the Mother of the Universe.

We must therefore have a synthesis of the philosophic and religious concepts of Reality. We must have Brahmanijñāsa and realize Brahma as Bliss itself and as Cosmic Divinity who is Ruler and Liberator besides being Creator and Preserver and Destroyer. 'आनन्दमयोऽन्यासात'

(*Brahma-Sūtras* I. i. 13) and 'जन्माच्य यतः' (*Brahma-Sūtras* I. i. 2).

The mind in its pure Buddhi aspect can and will love Brahma as God in the Iśwara aspect and can and will realize the Brahma or Akhaṇḍa Satchidānanda aspect by merging in it and realizing its identity with it. The creative Śakti of Iśwara is called Śakti or Prakṛti or Māyā according as we consider it from one or another angle of vision. The error in the Sāṅkhya system was that it raised to the rank of a dual or biune principle as Pradhāna what was only a Śakti of Iśwara who again is only Brahma viewed in relation to the universe which consists of embodied souls and matter which are themselves but a manifestation of Brahma. The mind has its triplexity of Sattwa and Rajas and Tamas. But when by Karmayoga it attains Śuddhi and becomes Sattvic and by Dhyanayoga it attains concentration and power and by Bhaktiyoga it attains expansion and by Jñānayoga becomes Intuition capable of realizing Infinity and rises to the height of Akhaṇḍakāra Vṛtti (Cosmic Consciousness), it merges in God (Sāyujya) after rising to the heights of Sālokya and Sāmipyā and Sārūpyā and Sārṣṭi or realizes its identity with Nirguṇa Brahma (Kaivalya) which is only God viewed in Himself and apart from His relation to the universe. These sublime truths are clearly taught by Bhagavān Śrī Rāmacandra to Hanumān in the *Muktikopaniṣad*.

This view is strictly in accordance with the most advanced modern science. Science has now realized and shown that matter is but an aspect of Energy and seems to feel, though it has not yet for-

mulated the truth in clear terms, that Energy itself may be but the vibration of something deeper and more fundamental which may be Mind or Consciousness. It is a fair hypothesis that the Divine Consciousness is as much the background of Mind as well as Matter and that both these are but modes or aspects or Prakāras of the former. Le Comte says: "Science following one line of thought, uncorrected by a wider philosophy, is actually led towards one extreme pantheistic immanency; the devout worshipper, following the wants of his religious nature, is naturally led towards another extreme—anthropomorphic personality. The only rational view is to accept both immanence and personality, even though we cannot clearly reconcile them, i.e., immanence without pantheism and personality without anthropomorphism." In fact, the variety of things is but a pyrotechnics of unity. The mind rises from height to height to purity and power till at last it flares into the illimitable and wondrous flame of Cosmic Consciousness (Sāyujya) and merges in the infinite eternal Ānanda (Tattwamasi). This is the supreme Yoga (Union). It is not an external gift but an internal attainment and realization. The ascending levels from matter to life and from life to mind and from mind to Ātmā may be viewed as vertical ascent or horizontal expansion, if we use figurative language. But it is only a case of different stages of inner realization. Real immortality is not mere survival of personality. It is a realization of our innate infinity of Bliss 'अथ मर्त्योऽश्रुते भवति, अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते' (The mortal gets immortalized and enjoys Brahmic Bliss in his inner being).

Thus the sanction of religion may begin as an external sanction but its ultimate sanction is an inner sanction. An external revelation has to be and will be confirmed and included and transcended in an inner realization. The realization of religious truths in Yoga or mystic union brings a certitude which no external authority can, or can hope to, rival. The exoteric realization must and will culminate in an esoteric realization. Ritual and creed and dogma are but the external portions of religion. The citadel, the *sanctum sanctorum*, is inner realization. Analysis flowers in synthesis and attains the fruitage of comprehensive unity. He who is diversely called as Ṛṣi, Yogi, saint, sage, seer, mystic, is the person who has got such an intimate realization of Infinity. When we pass from the sheaths or Kośas to the core of reality, we realize such infinite unity, as the seer realizes and declares at the end of the *Īkōpaniṣad*: 'योऽसावसौ पुः सोऽहमसि' (What that Being is, I am). The Infinite Beauty and Goodness and Love and Truth is the same as Infinite Bliss and the soul in its self-sublimation is one with the Oversoul. Such a realization is called Intuition or Gnosis or Anubhava or Avagati or Sākṣatkāra. It is not extinction but fulness. It is Akhaṇḍa Ananta Satchidānanda.

Professor Max Muller has well called the Vedānta as "the most sublime philosophy and the most satisfying religion". When we visualize the cosmic totality, the absolute in relation to it is called Īswara. The great Western philosopher Hegel says well: "Without the world, God is not God. If there is no universe, there can be no God." It

is this truth that the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* declares: 'यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायते येन जातानि जीवन्ति यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविश्लित' (From whom these creatures take their birth, born of whom they live, and whom they enter on leaving their body). Hence the wonderful order in Nature is due to omniscience and omnipotence. Whatever name we may give Him in this or that human language—Īswara or Jehovah or Āllāh—He is Omniscience and Omnipotence and Omnipresence. A recent writer says well: "Religion demands as the very condition of its existence a God who transcends the universe; philosophy as imperiously requires His immanence in Nature." It is the glory of Hinduism that it has reconciled the demands of philosophy and religion, and shown the thorough harmony of God's immanence and transcendence. The *Bhāgavata* and the *Gītā* have this trait as their crown of glory.

It is this grand unique supreme synthesis of philosophy and religion that is the highest glory of the *Bhāgavata*. The West has kept philosophy and religion apart but India has united them. What is the value of the cold abstractions of Philosophy which are unrelated to our nature and goal or of the warm aspirations of Religion which Reason ignores or derides ? Science must blossom into Philosophy and attain the fruitage of Religion. Else all the three will be lost indeed. In the very opening verse of *Bhāgavata*, this synthetic note is struck.

जन्माश्रय यतोऽन्वयादितरतश्चर्षभिःः स्वराद्
तेने ब्रह्म हृदा य आदिकवये मुष्मान्ति यस्मृत्यः ।
तेजोवारिमृदां यथा विनिमयो यत्र त्रिसगोऽस्मृता
धार्मना स्वेन सदा निरस्तकुइकं सत्यं परं धीमहि ॥

"Let us meditate on the Supreme (Lord) from whom the creation, preservation, etc., of this world proceed; for, He is in all real things as Sat and is not to be sought for in unreal things; He enterseverything as the cause, and is different from all effected things; (He is the cause of all this), both by positive and negative proofs. Let us meditate on Him who is all-wise, who shines by Himself (being essentially wisdom); Him who revealed the Vedas to Brahma, the first sage, through his mind (*i.e.*, who inspired him with a knowledge of the Vedas)—the Vedas in respect of (*i.e.*, in understanding) which even sages are bewildered; Him who is Truth, (whose presence confers the appearance of reality on other things); Him as depending on whose real essence, the threefold creation of (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) does not seem false (unreal) (*i.e.*, even the unreal creation seems a reality), even as are the modifications (illusory forms) of Fire, Water and Earth;—Him in whom the threefold creation is (indeed) unreal; Him who, by virtue of His own glory, has ever distanced illusion (from self)."

(*Bhāgavata* I. i. 1)

The opening words 'जन्मायस्य यत्' recall the second Sūtra in the *Brahma-Sūtras*. God is called so at the beginning and as 'सत्यं परम्' at the end. 'सत्यं परं भीमदि' is Para Brahma Gāyatrī. Thus the verse begins with the Taṭastha Lakṣaṇa of Brahma and closes with the Swarūpa Lakṣaṇa of Brahma. Sridhara says in his commentary on this verse: 'तमेव स्वरूपं तदस्त्वलक्षणम्यामुपलक्षयति।'

It is wrong to suppose that when we speak of God and the Absolute there is an element of dualism. God is the

Absolute viewed in relation to the universe. The Absolute is God viewed out of relation to the universe. Such a relation is not an externally imposed relation. It is a self-limitation out of Līlā (sportive creativeness). Iśwara is the word which connotes both immanence and transcendence. The word Paramātmā emphasizes immanence whereas the word Bhagavān emphasizes transcendence. The *Bhāgavata* emphasizes this truth beyond doubt when it says:

'ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्दते।'

This is not all. There has been a battle royal in our country as to whether God has form or is formless and as to whether God has qualities or is beyond qualities. (Sākāra or Nirākāra, Saguna or Nirguna). Here again the battle is a futile battle. In relation to the world when we regard God as the Creator and Preserver and Destroyer and as the giver of Salvation of Mukti (liberation) and as Beauty and Love and Mercy and Grace, God has form and qualities. Beauty, creative power, love, mercy, grace, etc., are qualities. They imply an infinite Śuddha Sattva mind. Beauty certainly implies form (Śuddha Sattva or Aprakṛta form) as well. But viewed out of relation to the universe, God is Akhaṇḍa Ananta Satchidānanda beyond Name and Form.

The most important aspect of the synthesis of Religion and Philosophy in the *Bhāgavata* is its vision of God as discussed above. Another aspect of that vision is its realization of the equality—nay, identity—of the Trimūrtis, though quite naturally it emphasizes the supremacy of Viṣṇu on the basis of the

नहि निन्दा न्याय. The division of the Purāṇas into those devoted to Śiva and Viṣṇu is for intensifying Bhakti to one divine aspect and not for fanning any hatred to the other aspects of God.

When Atri performed penance to propitiate the cause of the universe, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva appeared before him. He asked them: "Which of you did I call here?" The Divinities replied:

यथा कृतस्ते सङ्कल्पो भाव्यं तेनैव नान्यथा ।
सत्सङ्कल्पस्य ते ब्रह्मन् यदै ध्यायति ते वयम् ॥

"Your purpose, O sage, should be (realized) only as it has been entertained by you and not otherwise; for your purpose is good; (and) indeed we form that one which you contemplate."

(*Bhāgavata* IV. i. 30)

Hence it follows that Iśwara means Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. That was why Atri got three sons owing to their triune blessing (Soma, Datta and Durvāsā). Later yet in the fourth Skandha in the portion relating to the destruction of Dakṣa Yajñā, Satī Devī tells Dakṣa:

यद् दृथक्षरं नाम गिरेरितं नृणां
सङ्कृतप्रसाकादभमाशु हन्ति तत् ।
पवित्रकीर्तिं तमलङ्घ्यशासनं *
भवानहो द्वेष्टि शिवं शिवेतः ॥

"Alas! thou being other than what is auspicious hatest Śiva (the auspicious one), whose name is hallowed and whose command is inviolable; whose name of two syllables (Śiva) uttered by the tongue, but once and incidentally, soon destroys the sin of men."

(*Bhāgavata* IV. iv. 14)

After Satī Devī's self-sacrifice, Brahmā praises Śiva thus:

जाने त्वामीशं विश्वस्य जगतो योनिवीजयोः ।
शक्तेः शिवस्य च परं यत्तद्वानिनरन्तरम् ॥
त्वमेव भगवन्नेतत्तिष्ठवशक्तयोः सर्वयोः ।
विश्वं सुजसि पास्यसि क्रीडन्नर्णपदो यथा ॥

"I know Thee to be the Lord of all the universe and to be that changeless Brahma which is the source of Śakti and Śiva, the mother and the seed of the world.

"O glorious one, it is Thou that like the spider createst, protectest and consumest the universe, making it a sport of Śiva and Śakti who are one in essence."

(*Bhāgavata* IV. vi. 42-43)

In the same strain, Viṣṇu confirms the same view:

अहं ब्रह्मा च शर्वश्च जगतः कारणं परम् ।
आत्मेश्वरं उपद्रष्टा स्वयंदृग्विशेषणः ॥
आत्ममायां समाविश्य सोऽहं गुणमयी दिज ।
सृजन् रक्षन् इत्यन् विश्वं दध्ये संक्षां क्रियोचिताम् ॥
तस्मिन् ब्रह्मण्यदितीये केवले परमात्मनि ।
ब्रह्मालदौ च भूतानि भेदेनाक्षोऽनुपश्यति ॥

"I am the prime cause of the universe, its soul and Lord, its witness shining by Myself and subject to no conditions, and I am also Brahmā and Śiva.

"O Brahman, such as I am, I entered into My own Māyā which is constituted of the Guṇas, and as I create, preserve or destroy the universe, I bore (bear) the several names appropriate to the work.

"From Me who am the one Brahman, without a second (whether of the same kind or of another kind) and who am Paramātmā, only the ignorant person sees Brahmā, Rudra and also all creatures as different."

(*Bhāgavata* IV. vii. 50—2)

Finally, in the episode of the churning of the milky ocean, we have a wonderful hymn in praise of Śiva as Parabrahma. These verses recall the similar verses in Skandha II Adhyāya 1 wherein the universe is described as the body of Viṣṇu (Virāṭswarūpa) and the verses describing the world-form of Viṣṇu in Viṣṇusahasranāma. How can the universe be the body of Viṣṇu as well as Śiva unless they are one? They are but the one eternal Iśwara in relation to one function or another. Bhagiratha similarly tells Gangā:

धारयिष्यति ते वेण रुद्रस्त्वात्मा शरीरणम् ।
यस्मिन्नोत्तमिदं प्रोतं विश्वं शाटीब तन्तुषु ॥

"Rudra will bear thy force; he is the supporter of all creatures; for into him this Universe is woven, warp and woof, like a cloth in its threads"

(IX. ix. 7)

Akrūra says:

त्वामेवान्ये शिवोक्तेन मार्गेण शिवरूपिणम् ।
वहाचार्यविभेदेन भगवन् समुपासते ॥

"Only Thee in the form of Śiva some others worship, following the course taught by Śiva and according to various details taught by many teachers (devoted to Śiva), they contemplate Thee, O Lord."

(X. xi. 8)

I may mention further that the *Bhāgavata* reconciles three different concepts of Māyā. One concept is that Māyā is but the inscrutable mysterious eternal infinite glorious power of God. Another concept is that it hides God and projects the universe and binds us to the wheel of Saṃsāra. A third concept is that it is the potency of illusion and delusion. There is no inherent incom-

patibility in these concepts. Brahma viewed in its relation to the universe is Iśwara. It is this relation that is expressed by the Māyā equation, viz., Brahma plus Māyā is equal to Iśwara. Iśwara is not a second principle in addition to Brahma. Nor is Māyā a third principle. The power of finitization is Māyā. Brahma viewed in relation to such power of finitization has form and attributes and is called Iśwara. This is technically expressed thus: 'मायाप्रतिबिम्ब ईरः' The *Bhāgavata* describes in one place Māyā as the laughter of God. 'इसो जनोन्मादकरी च माया दुर्घटसर्गो यदपांगमोक्षः' (*Bhāgavata* II. i. 31). When the world-manifestation aspect is prominently before our mind, we say that Māyā is the power of Iśwara. When we get lost in the parts and forget the whole and the source of all, we call Māyā as Avidyā from our Jīva standpoint. There can be no Avidyā in God. From the Divine standpoint, the potency of finitization is Māyā or Śakti. The universe is but an overflow of the Divine Bliss—an expression of His Ānanda—'आनन्दादथेव स्वस्विमानि भूतानि जायते' (*Taittiriya Upaniṣad*). From the soul's standpoint, the operation of such finitization is Avidyā. If we know this we shall have no delusion.

मायां वर्णयतोऽज्ञ्य ईश्वरस्यात्मुमोदतः ।
शृण्वतः अद्वया नित्यं माययाऽस्तमा न मुश्यति ॥

"When Ātmā (any one) proceeds to describe the Māyā of the Lord, who may be looking upon it in approbation, or when he listens to it with faith every day, he does not become confounded thereby."

(II. vii. 5.)

The reality of the universe is relative, not absolute. The Mithyā of the

Adwaitin means only this and nothing more. The Saṅkāryavāda or Saṅkhyāti of the Viśiṣṭādwaitī also must be interpreted in the same way, for the expanded (स्वरूप) universe is only relative and finite.

From the above synthesis there naturally flow a synthesis of the paths and a synthesis of the goals, and hence there is no substance in the medieval battles about Sādhanas and Mokṣa. The *Gītā* shows how Bhakti vitalizes Karma and Dhyāna and Jñāna and is self-sufficient when it is supreme. There need not be any battle of Sādhanas, as each of them leads to the same goal, though each system-builder may say that his Sādhana is the Antaranga Sādhana (immediate means) while the other Sādhanas are Bahiranga Sadhanas (mediate means).

Thus whether an aspirant for liberation does Karmayoga knowing and loving God and surrendering the fruits to Him, or whether he is immersed in introspective meditation (Dhyāna) on God, or whether he is full of supreme Prema for God who gives him Jñāna also, or whether he is full of Jñāna of which Bhakti is an Anga, he achieves liberation and infinite and eternal Bliss through the path which appeals to him most.

तस्माद् युक्तेनिद्रयग्रामो युक्तचित्तं इदं जगत् ।
आत्मनिक्षेप्त्वा विततमात्मानं मम्बधाश्वरे ॥
शानविशानसंयुक्तं आत्मभूतः शरीरणाम् ।
आत्मानुभवतुष्टात्मा नान्तरार्थविहृन्यसे ॥

"Therefore do thou properly train thy mind and senses and see this Universe in Atmā and find the pervading Atmā in Myself, the Supreme Lord.

"Possessed of Jñāna and Vijñāna (the conclusions of the Vedas and their realization) and immersed in the delight of self-realization and finding thyself to be the self of all embodied creatures, thou wilt not experience obstructions."

(XI. vii. 9-10)

Why do the bigots pursuing one path or another condemn the other paths? Why do they suggest that as we rise in the particular Sādhanā which we like, the obligation to be moral or to help others ceases? The *Bhāgavata* urges the same truth as the *Gītā*. The famous second verse in the *Bhāgavata* says that love has no element of bargaining and does not involve any element of injury as in the case of sacrifices and is the easiest of the paths leading to God.

धर्मः प्रोज्जितं कलबोद्धत्र परमे निर्भत्सराणां सतां
वेदं वास्तवमन्व वसु गिरवं तापत्रयोम्बूलनस् ।
श्रीमद्भागवते महामुनिङ्कृते किं वा परंश्चित्तः
सद्यो हृथवस्तु यतेऽन्न इति भिः शुश्रूपुभिस्तक्षणात् ॥

"Here, in this glorious *Bhāgavata* produced by the great sage, the highest Dharma is taught, wholly free from worldly interests, but to be performed only out of devotion to Him; it is the course of the righteous full of mercy and free from envy and jealousy.—Here the thing to be known is the Real of reals (the absolutely real), (is the individual Jīva who is an Āṁśa of the One Reality, as not being different from the latter, this is possible to be known without any effort)—the thing which leads to the Highest bliss (and) puts an end to the three kinds of miseries. Could the Lord be at once made to fill one's heart with His presence by any other means? No; (on the other

hand), He is at once secured in their hearts—(His grace is at once secured), only by the meritorious who would listen to and study this."

(I. i. 2)

Equally important is the synthesis of goals. The goal is eternal infinite supreme bliss. Why should there be any wrangling as to whether Nirguna Brahma Jñāna or Saguna Brahma Bhakti gives greater bliss, when they are two types of infinite eternal supreme bliss? Does not supreme Dhyāna Samādhi give such bliss? Why should not a Bhakta prefer the bliss of devotion as an end in itself and prefer it even to the bliss of liberation? Nay, why should we not equally exalt the bliss of Ranti Deva who did not want paradise or liberation but preferred an endless succession of births in which he

could live inside those afflicted with sorrow and remove their sorrow?

Such is the synthesis of philosophy and religion in the *Bhāgavata*. It is the essence of Vedas and Vedānta. In the literature of the universe, it is the supreme Epic of Devotion, the brightest star in the epic of devotional literature, the finest of flower in the garden of godliness, the most resplendent gem in the mine of spiritual truth. The more we read it, the more we love it, and the more we love it, the more we read it, till we get God's grace as the result of our knowledge and love of God. It is ever-new, ever-fresh, ever-fair, and ever-sweet. It is the finest fruit or the heavenly tree of the Veda. The divine parrot (Śuka) has tasted it and tested it. It is full of the nectar of bliss. It is the supreme Rasa, viz., Ānandarasa. May we taste it and enjoy it more and more and ever more !!

"Have goodwill
To all that lives; letting unkindness die,
And greed and wrath, so that your lives be made
Like soft airs passing by."

"The immortal man is he who has conquered himself; who no longer identifies himself with the self-seeking forces of the personality, but who has trained himself to direct those forces with the hand of a master, and so has brought them into harmony with the causal energy and source of all things."

—James Allen.

Intuition

By R. SRINIVASAN, M. A.

Intuition is an important aspect of human nature, though the man-in-the-street is not quite conscious of it. Especially from the standpoint of the soul, intuition is of paramount importance. To understand the real place and function of intuition we must grasp clearly the constitution of man. As we all know he has his purely physical nature and with it the vitality principle. Then he has the desires and the concrete mind. Beyond these there is the abstract mind or as it is called the formless Manas. Beyond this again there are the Buddhi and the spirit of man and so on. Intuition really begins where the sphere of function of the concrete mind ceases. In this age when the lower mind is so very prominent and dominates all our activities it is quite natural that the function of intuition is not properly recognized.

The function of intuition is so much at variance with that of the concrete mind that it is almost difficult for an ordinary intellectual man to value intuition at its proper worth. Intuition is something like a sudden illumination, it floods all the lower aspects of man and gives a perception, remarkable in its width and its depth. To illustrate the difference between the functions of the mind and intuition, let us consider how the mind works. The process employed by the mind is analytical in essence while intuition is fundamentally synthetic. The mind perceives, through various senses the outer phenomena,

collects them, tabulates them, arranges them and from the mass of innumerable data draws inferences and these inferences are stated as scientific laws. Obviously, no scientific law can be absolute truth. A law may hold good for a long time, but if a new phenomenon turns up which disobeys the law, the law has to be so altered as to include and explain the new phenomenon also. That has been the way of all scientific advancement. But intuition works in a different way. In some mysterious way in which imagination plays an important part, it gets at the truth in a flash without having to go through all the intermediary stages incidental to analysis. Suppose I am led into a dark room and I am asked to prepare a list of all the articles in that room. Being in the dark I cannot see anything in that room but I shall grope my way through, feel with my senses the various objects and laboriously make out a catalogue of all the articles in that room. Still there is a possibility of my catalogue being defective or even positively erroneous. But suppose, for instance, that I have an electric torch in my hand and I switch it on. Then the whole room is visible to my gaze and I have only to perceive what all there is in the room without moving or groping through. This more or less illustrates the essential difference between mind and intuition. Intuition is something like the electric torch. If one is able to use it, he knows things by a sudden illumination rather than by laborious mental process.

Intuition may be said to be of two kinds for theoretical purposes. Now, I was speaking of the abstract mind beyond the concrete mind. The peculiar feature of the abstract mind is that it does not deal so much with forms as the concepts which are clothed in various forms. While there may be thousands of chairs in the world, the idea of the chair, i.e., the abstract chair, is only one. You may draw millions of triangles but the quality of the triangle or that which makes a triangle what it is, the idea behind all these various triangles is only one. In other words, the abstract mind deals in types out of which numberless forms are built down in the concrete mind. It follows from this that the abstract mind is in one sense a synthesizing agent getting at the one idea behind various forms which clothe the idea. Intuition, at times, comes from the region of this abstract mind. While we are struggling here with various forms without being able to get at the common type behind, intuition may flash down and give us the idea. It is the play of such intuition that enabled great men of the world to formulate laws or possible hypotheses which cover a multitude of phenomena. The laws of gravitation as enunciated by Newton was an act of such intuition. And again it is the play of this intuition that led to the enunciation of the famous principle of Archimedes.

There is a higher intuition which originates from even a higher level, the level of Buddhi, that is the principle in man which unites the various apparently disorganized and disunited elements down here. The essence of this Buddhi is union. A person dominated by the

play of Buddhi is one who always seeks unity and similarity even behind apparently irreconcilable elements. Now this faculty, when it functions, goes to the very root of things automatically, and views everything from that supreme standpoint of unity. Intuition playing from this region enables one to put himself *en rapport* with everyone and everything in this universe. Thus he gets at the root of things and perceives everything in its true relationship, and so he is able to see things as they actually are and not as they seem. A person who is dominated by the activity of this Buddhi aspect is naturally a highly evolved soul. He lives and rules his personality from a centre which is not reached by ordinary mortals. To him everything seems to be like an open page. Apparently discordant things reveal a harmony to his eyes. Apparently insoluble problems seem quite easy of solution.

Though at present the faculty of intuition is not so normal as the faculty of mind, a time will come when the average man will have this intuition playing about him more frequently. Man is always evolving. From a piece of granite to a tree is a far cry. From a tree to an animal is a further cry. From animal to man is a still further cry. But the human soul has evolved through all these stages in course of time taking perhaps millions and millions of years to pass from step to step. Now we have reached almost the culmination of our mental development. The next step, as even the most advanced scientists say at present, is to develop a new faculty which will interpret the phenomena of

this world in a new way and that faculty is intuition. Already in cultured men and women this faculty is playing about. One may almost say that one of the essentials of a cultured human being is this faculty of intuition functioning at least to some extent in him.

When this faculty of intuition functions, its force seems to be almost irresistible. You dare not disobey its mandate. You feel so sure about it. You do not feel inclined to stop and question. But there is one danger in this matter. Very many people are merely dominated by impulse and may mistake this impulse for intuition. Some impulsive people do not stop to think. They feel so sure of their position. They go headlong into what their impulse dictates them to do. Bishop Leadbeater has suggested one or two methods by which we can distinguish impulse from intuition. In the case of impulse you will generally find something in the nature of a personal gratification involved, while intuition is essentially impersonal. Then in the case of impulse if you fail to heed it there is generally a reaction of resentment produced. In the case of intuition it is not so. A third remarkable difference is that in the case of impulse, if you keep quiet for sometime, it loses strength and gradually wears away. But intuition is insistent and does not lose strength by lapse of time.

One may ask how to develop this intuition. Of course, it will come in due course in the natural process of evolution. But if you want to quicken its growth you may do it in one or two ways. First, by getting into the habit of thinking

more abstractly, more universally and more in terms of types, we may develop this intuition. In fact, in all meditation, part of our thought is directed towards this habit of abstracting our attention from the concrete world of forms into the abstract world of ideas.

Another method of rousing this faculty of intuition is through Art. In fact all great artists are highly intuitive. In great works of art one always finds this faculty of intuition standing out. A work of real art sums up varieties of human experiences and generalizes them for us. Whether it is a portrait or a piece of sculpture or a line of poetry this quality of generalization will be evident. When a great artist paints the portrait of a person he not only paints that particular person but in some mysterious way he gets at the type to which that person belongs and represents that type also in his portrait. That is where a good portrait differs from a photographic reproduction. While the latter gives us the physical appearance of a person at a particular time, the portrait of the same person drawn by a great artist represents the real man that he is, not only what he is at a particular moment but what he has been and perhaps will be in the future. The greatest dramas of the world are attempts at portraying human experiences in a generalized impersonal way. Through art one will be able to achieve in a very short time in a sort of vicarious way what ordinarily will take years and years to achieve in ordinary life. Therefore if one works along the line of art he will inevitably develop this faculty of sensing the type behind the forms, getting at the root of

things and generalizing particular human experiences into universal experiences. To him persons and things will appear to be much fuller, much nobler and much deeper than to the ordinary individual and so through the line of art also we can develop this faculty of Intuition.

Then another and perhaps surer and more comprehensive method is to develop the habit of perceiving similarity and unity in apparently contradictory and diverse things. This is best achieved through Love and its various phases such as friendship, sympathy and so on.

When a person is habitually of a loving nature he will naturally work more towards unity than towards diversity. Love enables one to transcend barriers, to seek contacts in all possible ways and to put oneself *en rapport* with other people. Through this process Buddhi is developed and therefore the higher intuition. If we develop our heart side by side with the mind and make the mind a willing and efficient tool in the hands of heart we shall find that this quality of intuition is developed in us more rapidly than otherwise.

The Individual and the Cosmic Mind

BY LALJI RAM SHUKLA, M. A.

Man, as he becomes conscious of his existence, finds that he is an individual. There are other individuals like him. He has certain desires and aspirations; so too they have. His powers are limited; just as others also have limited powers of action. He can do certain things, but he cannot do all things. Physical nature on the one hand and other human beings on the other put limitations to his freedom of action. He is ever trying to overcome this opposition. He sometimes meets with success, at other times he meets with failures.

So long as man goes on succeeding, overcoming the opposition of nature and of other men, he need not think that there are higher powers shaping his ends. Materialism is thus a philosophy of superficial success. To people elated with pride of their successes with trifles, failure teaches the first lesson of

spirituality. Man tries to understand his true relationship with the universe only when he finds that in spite of all his efforts, success is not coming to him. His hopes and aspirations are remaining unfulfilled. He needs the help of some one who would in some miraculous way fulfil the designs made by him. He thus invokes the help of higher powers.

Knock and ye shall find it. When man wants spiritual help, it comes. Sure defeats, to his surprise, turn into victories. With the discovery of the fact that a higher power exists, man gains faith in his own powers. Materialism leads to pessimism after a period of easy optimism. Enduring optimism comes only with the discovery of a spiritual existence.

We are all faintly aware of this existence. Churches and temples bear testimony to this fact. We conceive of

God as a great friend of ourselves. He is the Omnipotent Being, who readily comes to the help of anyone who calls him with a pure heart. God is worshipped, because he is our own.

This God however, is never seen. He ever remains transcendent. In temples and churches we worship the symbols of God, but never see Him whose symbols they are. The more do we try to visualize him, the farther does He recede from our view. Different persons and faiths give varying descriptions of God when one tries to know the details of Him.

Here doubt comes. Is not God a pure fiction of our mind? Religion, says one voice, is an escape from the tyranny of nature. It is refusing to face reality. The psychologists regard the thought of God as a compensatory activity of the unconscious mind. What we lack in ourselves we attribute to God and call Him our own. Thus we seek an inverted fulfilment of our desires. Examine the heavens of all religions. What do we find in them? Just a fulfilment of the aspirations of the heart.

But doubt is the greatest educator of mankind. Doubt destroys credulity and initiates a search for a sure foundation of knowledge. Out of scepticism knowledge is born. Man cannot remain a sceptic for long. A sceptic stands nowhere, human mind cannot remain in this condition for long. The seeker of Truth does find it in the end.

The worship of God is worship of one's own being. Why should man aspire to gain perfection, if perfection were foreign to his nature? Man imagines God to be perfect; the possibil-

ity of this imagination implies that he has had a foretaste of perfection. He can attribute to God only those qualities which he can conceive of in his mind. The possibility of having the conceptions shows that those qualities were innately known by the human mind. Man, thus, discovers in himself a God when he conceives of God outside of himself. Man thought himself to be clay when he saw only clay all around himself. When man sees the universe pervaded by spiritual existence, he realizes himself as a spiritual being.

Now how is this human spirit related to other spirits and to the All-pervading Cosmic Spirit. As soon as this question comes we find ourselves in a fathomless ocean. Our bodies are separated from each other by space. Bodies are material and all matter is in space and obeys the laws of spatial relationships. Do the spirits also obey the same laws? Do spirits exist in space or space is only an aspect of matter? Deeper thought tells us that if spirits were determined by laws of spatial relations, the spirits themselves would be material. Thus so long as we do not free the conception of spirit from spatial attributes, we really have not conceived of its true nature. All our thoughts hover round embodied spirits. Both of the living as well as of the departed, we think in terms of the bodies they possess and possessed. We have never conceived of a disembodied spirit or spirit as really it is. In fact, we have thought only of bodies and not of the spirit. In other words, all our thoughts are material. Perhaps we can do nothing else with thoughts.

How then are we to know the spirit which alone is power? Know thyself first and the rest of the mystery of the universe will unravel of its own accord. Thus Self-Knowledge becomes the key to the Knowledge of Reality. In the ignorance of our true nature, we conceived of the world as this way and that; the process is now to be reversed. We know so many things but not the Self. Let us now know the Self first and then see how other things look.

When we turn our gaze inward, we find that the Self is not matter. The body is not the Self for it can be conceived by the Self as its own object. Time and space do not enter into the constitution of the Self. They are all objects to the Self. The Self thinks of them, but transcends them. The Self is timeless and spaceless. If this be so, then there cannot be many selves. For it is space which separates the many. Big and small are spatial conceptions. The Self is neither big nor small. Coming and going also pertain to spatial relations. All movement is in space. The Self, not being in space, does not move. With the knowledge of the Self the distinction of the individual and the universal vanishes; for the individual is the universal.

All time is none,
All space is here,
All problems solved
Solution clear
All Truth—I am.

Carrying with itself the screen of ignorance the Self projects itself in many forms. The form of God is one of the many forms into which the Self

projects itself. The Self is God, ignorant of its true nature. God will ever remain transcendent, for trying to catch God is trying to catch one's own shadow. It is falling in love with one's own image. If the image is so beautiful, how much more that reality be beautiful of which it is only a shadow!

The awakening of oneself to the knowledge that the individual is rooted in the universal changes the faces of all things. They now have new meanings. Man at once realizes that he is not a tiny being, as his body would lead him to suppose. His thoughts are thoughts of the Great Being seeking manifestation in finite forms. Let a man view things in this light and he will see that he is not a powerless being, there is the Cosmic Power behind him.

One man thinks out a scheme and finds that it cannot be realized; another makes big schemes and finds all nature opening out its secrets to enable him to fulfil his designs. Why is it so? Because the first man does the work without faith; the second man does it with faith. God will help in the fulfilment of what is Godly. When some one does a work as a duty from Heaven, success is bound to come. For here it is not individual self but the Universal that is functioning. As a matter of fact the Universal Self functions all the time, but our ignorance of the presence of the Divine Hand makes us disbelieve in our own powers and thus victories turn into defeats. To dedicate a work to God is to call the Cosmic Mind to help and thus turn the defeat into victory.

The truth that our innermost being is God can be realized only when we act

in harmony with this truth. Let us forget our petty ends, burn the small self and the knowledge of the true God will dawn itself automatically on us. Let all

our actions be dedicated to Him; for in fact He is our true being. We know we cannot fail, for God never fails. All failure is ignorance.

Prayer is Power

BY ALEXIS CARREL, M. D.

Even our slightest impulse toward prayer has a dynamic, beneficial effect upon our lives.

Prayer is not only worship; it is also an invisible emanation of man's worshiping spirit, the most powerful form of energy that one can generate. The influence of prayer on the human mind and body is as demonstrable as that of secreting glands. Its results can be measured in terms of increased physical buoyancy, greater intellectual vigour, moral stamina, and a deeper understanding of the realities underlying human relationships.

If you make a habit of sincere prayer, your life will be very noticeably and profoundly altered. Prayer stamps with its indelible mark our actions and demeanour. A tranquillity of bearing, a facial and bodily repose, are observed in those whose inner lives are thus enriched. Within the depths of consciousness a flame kindles. And man sees himself. He discovers his selfishness, his silly pride, his fears, his greeds, his blunders. He develops a sense of moral obligation and intellectual humility. Thus begins a journey of the soul toward the realm of grace.

Prayer is a force as real as terrestrial gravity. As a physician, I have seen men, after all other therapy had

failed, lifted out of disease and melancholy by the serene effort of prayer. It is the only power in the world that seems to overcome the so-called "laws of nature", the occasions on which prayer has dramatically done this have been termed "miracles". But a constant, quieter miracle takes place hourly in the hearts of men and women who have discovered that prayer supplies them with a steady flow of sustaining power in their daily lives.

Too many people regard prayer as a formalized routine of words, a refuge for weaklings, or a childish petition for material things. We sadly undervalue prayer when we conceive it in these terms, just as we should underestimate rain by describing it as something that fills the birdbath in our garden. Properly understood, prayer is a mature activity indispensable to the fullest development of personality—the ultimate integration of man's highest faculties. Only in prayer do we achieve that complete and harmonious assembly of body, mind and spirit which gives the frail human reed its unshakable strength.

The words, "Ask and it shall be given to you", have been verified by the

experience of humanity. True, prayer may not restore the dead child to life or bring relief from physical pain. But prayer, like radium, is a source of luminous, self-generating energy.

How does prayer fortify us with so much dynamic power? To answer this question (admittedly outside the jurisdiction of science) I must point out that all prayers have one thing in common. The triumphant hosannas of a great Oratorio, or the humble supplication of an Iroquois hunter begging for luck in the chase, demonstrate the same truth: that human beings seek to augment their finite energy by addressing themselves to the infinite source of all energy. When we pray, we link ourselves with the inexhaustible motive power that spins the universe. We ask that a part of this power be apportioned to our needs. Even in asking, our human deficiencies are filled and we arise strengthened and repaired.

But we must never summon God merely for the gratification of our whims. We derive most power from prayer when we use it, not as a petition, but as a supplication that we may become more like Him. Prayer should be regarded as practice of the Presence of God. An old peasant was seated alone in the last pew of the village church. "What are you waiting for?" he was asked; and he answered, "I am looking at Him and He is looking at me". Man prays not only that God should remember him but also that he should remember God.

How can prayer be defined? Prayer is the effort of man to reach God, to

commune with an invisible being, creator of all things, supreme wisdom, truth, beauty, and strength, father and redeemer of each man. This goal of prayer always remains hidden to intelligence. For both language and thought fail when we attempt to describe God.

We do know, however, that whenever we address God in fervent prayer we change both soul and body for the better. It could not happen that any man or woman could pray for a single moment without some good result. "No man ever prayed", said Emerson, "without learning something".

One can pray everywhere. In the streets, the subway, the office, the shop, the school, as well as in the solitude of one's own room or among the crowd in a church. There is no prescribed posture, time or place.

"Think of God more often than you breathe", said Epictetus, the Stoic. In order really to mould personality, prayer must become a habit. It is meaningless to pray in the morning and to live like a barbarian the remainder of the day. True prayer is a way of life; the truest life is literally a way of prayer.

The best prayers are like the improvisations of gifted lovers, always about the same thing yet never twice the same. We cannot all be as creative in prayer as Saint Therasa or Bernard of Clairvaux, both of whom poured their adoration into words of mystical beauty. Fortunately, we do not need their eloquence; our slightest impulse to prayer is recognized by God. Even if we are pitifully dumb, or if our tongues

are overlaid with vanity or deceit, our meagre syllables of praise are acceptable to Him, and He showers us with strengthening manifestations of His love.

To day, as never before, prayer is a binding necessity in the lives of men and nations. The lack of emphasis on the religious sense has brought the world to the edge of destruction. Our deepest source of power and perfection

has been left miserably undeveloped. Prayer, the basic exercise of the spirit, must be actively practised in our private lives. The neglected soul of man must be made strong enough to assert itself once more. For if the power of prayer is again released and used in the lives of common men and women, if the spirit declares its aims clearly and boldly, there is yet hope that our prayer for a better world will be answered.

The Divine Friend

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

Severed from Thee men are like autumn-leaves

That fallen from the tree which gave them sustenance and strength
Swirl through the air towards an unknown goal,
Of various shapes and tints and size,
Like birds of magic plumage flashing in the sun,
Lit up an instant and then gone and dark,
Yet helpless all alike without thine aid
And on their way to Death once they have left Thy Life.

The storms of folly drive them on and on,
And passion plays with them in mockery and pain
Making them love and hate and hate again and love
And cling in desperation to the idols of their hopes
But to be hurled once more into the utter void of blank despair.

The stone on being flung into some pool
Must sink through lanky water-weeds down to the bottom
And there disappear into the noisome masses of its squelching mud
No longer touched by light and air and wind.

Days, months, and years, fly past; nay, more:
Lives upon lives tainted, deformed and soiled
Are broken on the wheel of endless births and deaths
That turns and turns for ever merciless and cold
Unheeding either happiness or pain,
While men wrapped in dense clammy fog of craving and of hate
Standing in nakedness of brutes and brutish greed grow dead and callous
And are robbed of all the splendour they possessed

In far-off days when the wild tribe of lusts
 Dared not come near them who had Thee for Friend
 And Charioteer and Ferryman and Guide;
 And there were none for whom to leave Thy Company
 And nought to dull the love they bore Thee
 And to put the lure of cheap enjoyments
 In the place of Thy vast Presence and calm Majesty.

Through their defection, anguish, pain and sorrow have become
 Their comrades on the weary paths that trail
 Through the wide spaces of this changeful world,
 Endless and aimless, full of thorns and strife,
 Yet leading nowhere like a heavy dream
 That clutches at the heart and forces it to bleed
 For phantom-shapes that are not and dissolve
 When he that dreamt them wakes and finds the sun
 Playing around him in bright ripples with the dew.

Violent distrust and envy poison all their thoughts and deeds
 While they in tragic blindness stumble through the dark
 Heart-sore and weary, dragging tired feet,
 Driven and whipped by gusts of passion, torn and bruised
 Until they learn that thus their yearning cannot be fulfilled,
 The yearning that is every human heart's
 For happiness and peace and comradeship of life.

Then comes a day for all when slowly, haltingly
 They turn their steps back to the source
 Whence they were torn through their apostasy in ages past,
 Trying to gain through discipline and hard austeries the strength
 And purity which are man's birthright and eternal heritage
 When he is free in the full joy of his true manhood's state.

Thou, the Eternal Comrade of all life that seeks
 Love and Compassion and the end of Death
 Giv'st men Thy word clothed in the garments of old times and new
 So that they in their helplessness can slowly see the light
 In which to reach Thy Feet and there remain scattered before them
 As an offering, their whole soul fixed in ecstasy on Thee
 Just like the Chakora-bird on seeing the bright moon,
 The object of his life, high in the sky,
 Or like the clouds hearing the peacock's call
 That rush t' where it rings over the plain
 And gather there in rapturous delight.

From then men are dry leaves which any wind
 May take and whirl and chase without resistance and without complaint,
 No longer severed in their pride from Thee and Thine
 But become the holy vestures of Thy Being and Thy Grace.
 For them no third thing in this universe exists
 But only Thou in one wide vast expanse,
 Ruler and Friend, standing beyond Eternity and Time,
 Who guides the seeking heart to plenitude of life and love and truth,
 Filling with splendour all who have renounced
 The quest of their own I-ness for the quest of Thee.

The Song of the Atman—II

“On Myself”

[With Pure Ego]

(Seen through different moods and planes)

(Continued from the previous number)

BY SRI PADMANABHA

(20)

I am that thing untouched by your intellect. No mouth has ever described me. They have only seen a ray of me. They have tasted only a grain of sugar of the great mountain of sugar.

All of you with the best brains among you, men, come and describe me ! Your Vedas, Upaniṣads, Bibles, Korans, Zend Avestas have only touched me just as a brave man walking up to my ocean touches the water with his tiny hands. Surely he cannot touch the whole vast expanse of my waters ! Verily, verily, your intellect cannot comprehend me fully. It can only catch a ray of mine. Yes, yes. Surely that is enough and more than enough for you !

(21)

Wonder, wonder, wonder ! Mystery, mystery, mystery ! Bliss, bliss, bliss ! This is how sages know me !

They cast everything to the winds, except me, whom they seize and imprison in their hearts with great courage.

Verily, verily, with all my colossal form and great power, I am unable to resist their claim over me. I am all compassion. Hence I, with all my indescribable attributes and majesty, occupy their hearts dwindling my size to the size of a thumb.

They never leave me and I never leave them. At the end when I so decide I take them in me and we become One. They lose themselves but gain me, that One indescribable.

Yes; losing everything with great courage, is the only way to me !

(22)

I am with you always; I never leave my place taken by me in you all. Know me to be there in you wherfrom your

'I thought proceeds always majestically. Yes—in your heart;—not the heart you know of !

Dive deep into yourself with an extremely calm mind; you will come across my abode in you. Know me to be in you always. Remember this: oh, remember this ! Knowing the *presence* at least of me, the One indescribable in you, shape your life well and nothing shall go wrong with you.

(23)

I am simply the witness of all things in and around me. I never act of my own accord.

For this reason: *I have my limbs very unwieldy*. Moreover, what is there for me to work ? What have I to long for ? Why should I work at all ? Can there be *work* for me ?

After these things which you see in and around you in the vast space proceeded from me, when—as I have already told you—I was in a funny mood, I have given complete autonomy to each and everyone of them subject to my being their great impartial *witness* over them.

Hence, my own little self, know yourself to be enjoying a thorough freedom without any fetters. You are as free as my winds. I have given you perfect freedom !

Moreover, I never leave you. I am in you. Therefore, knowing me in you as your great witness, play, my children of immortality, in this wonderful house of mine to your heart's content.

(24)

Since I have taken the role of your witness in you, I cannot interfere in

what all you do. If, however, you consult me, I shall advise you with my divine silent voice. Yes, yes, yes !

Whenever you want to do anything, remember me in you; and if you have the knack of consulting me in that matter with which you are concerned, I shall advise you, my child, I shall lead you to success in everything.

(25)

Like a cow with swollen udder full of milk and bellowing for its calf with unfathomable affection, I am everywhere, full of compassion, ready to help you, ready to nourish you, my children. How I long for helping you is known to some of your sages. Ask them !

Though the witness in you, I long for nourishing you with my milk of compassion. Yes ! Be like a *calf* unto me. You shall quaff my milk to your contentment.

(26)

I am like a great, great, great ship. Ye are my passengers. I alone guide myself. You are simply to be in me.

You cannot know the destination. I know it. You don't know whence you came and boarded this ship. But I know it. You cannot know how long you will be in my ship. I alone know it.

Therefore why *care* about anything ? Simply trust me and be in me. Don't carry any burden of your own, ye petty selves, on your heads. Throw all your burdens in me, your ship. Do you doubt the ship which carries you all will not carry your little burdens as well ?

Remember, remember, if you care for anything of your own, I shall keep

aloof as the witness. You will have to suffer.

If you trust me and simply remain as my good children, I shall take care of you and when I choose so, I shall enter you and you shall enter me and we shall be that One indescribable. Verily, verily, it is so.

(27)

Yes. You, my dear child, want to know *me* out of you! Around you! Above you! Below you! Good, good; very good.

Think of me already in you as your eye! Make me in you as your eye! You can surely do that! No doubt about that!

With me in you as your eye divine, see out of you! I smile in the waves of the mighty deep. I smile in the blue of the vast space. I twinkle in the myriads of stars playing hide and seek eternally. I shine in your Sun. I sing my song from the Queen of Stars. I stand in your huge mountains. I roam about on the steeds of winds. I dally with waters in my clouds. I laugh in the lightnings. I indicate my voice in the thunders. I show my pity through your cows. In short, I show my something in all things in and around you.

I am here. I am there. I am everywhere. I go there. I come here. I play everywhere. Find your level with me in you and around you; above you and below you. You will then know the Truth of me, that One indescribable.

(28)

Ay, me! I am verily a beggar! With matted locks, with dust-laden limbs, quite naked, with a skull cap as my

bowl, I go about begging you, my children of immortality! Your heavenly Father comes to *you* to beg of something!

What does he ask for, beg for? Oh, your heavenly Father, who poses as a beggar, is a great cheat! He asks you to cast yourselves in his bowl! He wants you as his alms! He says with a smile on his red cunning lips that he will carry you in his bowl to bliss! To bliss everlasting!

Will you believe that cheat? Are you sure of his leading you to immortal bliss? Anyhow, he will be an eternal beggar!

(29)

Ay, me! poor me! I am to steal the jewel of you all, my own children of immortality! Can't you give me the thing which I most long for from you, my children? When your very very aged Father wants a thing for himself in his grand old age, will you not give him that thing, ye young children?

No. How can you part with that? Oh. Then I, your heavenly Father, will take that, yes—steal that—thing out of you! It is / that gave you my desired thing. You refuse to give me back that thing? I shall steal that thing out of you!

Don't weep, my children of immortality! When I steal that thing out of you, of course when I like it so, there shall be no mourner of that loss. There will not then remain anything of you. Then, to be sure, you will be in me, and I—your Father—in you. And nothing shall go ill and everything will be *bliss* everlasting!

(30)

You know that your Father is a funny man. With all his fun, he is the great serious actor ! He will sing, he will weep, he will cry, he will act splendidly his part which he chooses of his own free will !

Once, I, your Father, came to you as the actor. With a beautiful peacock crest on his head of curly bee-like hairs, with the most enchanting face with a perpetual smile, with the most charming human form, with shining jewels and dress on his person, and with a melodious flute in his hand, your Father came to you to play the part of the actor. Don't you know him ? Don't you know that I, your Father, was then called *Kṛṣṇa* ? Yes. With my own troop of actors and actresses, I came to act before you in my glory.

Ah, how I sang then with my sweet rich voice ! How I played on my flute ! How I sported with my actresses ! How I played the part of the hero quite well ! I sang, I played, I cried, I even wept, I smiled, I laughed and showed my glory every now and then ! You all went mad after me !

Your sages approached me with great reverence and wanted their share of my glory ! I instructed them the path to their desired object. I acted the part of their Teacher.

A great majority of you wanted—no, doubted,—my acting the part of the warrior. So, without taking up arms in my own hands, I cleared the undesirables and those who doubted me and even my friends, from this house of mine !

Yes, yes. I, your Father, know the acting art very well. I am verily the Master Actor on this stage of my world. I act ! I act !!

(31)

I once came to you just as a man, a man like you. I hid all my glory in me and passed for a man. I wanted to show you the path a man should tread in this house of mine, to eternal glory.

I passed for a man quite well. I moved with all equally. I respected my elders; I loved my youngers. I was the good son, the good husband, the good friend among you. Yes. I was very good in everything.

So it happened that there was nobody to equal me in anything. Here was something stumbling for me. Under such circumstances, when there was no equal to me in anything, my passing for a man among you like you was a bit monotonous. Therefore, I, your Father, created extraordinary circumstances on my way during my stay among you.

Since I was the eldest son of the most virtuous and the most aged among you and who happened to be your monarch as well, my creation of extraordinary circumstances was known only to a few sages and you all as before smiled at me, pitied at me, followed me and thought me one among you. I thus succeeded in my game. I was one among you like you.

By remaining a man like you, I slowly showed you the path before you to eternal glory while in my house. I made evil dash against me and thus destroyed it. Thus hiding my glory in me, I showed my glory among you.

Sages extolled me and described me as that One indescribable itself, very truly. I with a smile told them that I was one like them.

Do you know me, my own children ? Do you not know that I, your Father, was then known as Rāma ?

Yes; that One indescribable came to you as a man and lived among you and showed you the path while on earth to eternal glory. Surely the most wise among you know me, Rāma, to be the best among my manifestations.

(32)

Listen to me, my children of immortality ! I now come as your Silent Teacher. I am of youthful stature. My disciples are made very old. I am seated with them around me, under the banyan tree, facing south. With a firm seat, with an erect head, with an eternal smile on my divine lips, I dive deep into me and remain as bliss, bliss everlasting.

I thus teach you, my children, very silently. I always teach you, in you, with silence,—complete, profound, majestic silence—the way to Bliss, to me, that One indescribable. Oh, listen to me, listen to my teaching and come down to me and lose you in me, bliss everlasting.

(33)

I, your heavenly Father, know to teach you with words; yes, with words of wisdom. I can teach you through words you best understand. Yes, listen to me as I teach you.

Have you ever thought of what is meant by Life ? I shall tell you that it is

that which is begun by one's birth and terminated by one's death. Thus the interim between one's birth and death in this world of mine becomes life. To me, your Father, it is an idea; but to you it is the greatest of things with which you are concerned. So much so, my children, you are life itself with a body as its house.

Now let me ask you, my little ones, where is this life in you. You know that life, that mysterious thing, lives in your body. How do you spend your life while on earth ? You fall asleep and are awake alternately. By doing these two you spend your life. All your other little things depend on these two.

But, where is your life when you sleep and wake up ? Sleeping and waking are the two banks of the stream of life. Hence life is between these two. Is it not a wonder ?

By continuous sleeping and continuous waking you break the two banks of the stream of life in you in your body. Thus a time comes when life is made unable to be in your body. Then life leaves your body and others say that you are dead.

You now ask me: "Oh, my Father, you are everywhere; such being your grandeur, you should be in me. You are in me. Then why don't you make me feel your presence and make me heir to your estate ?" Oh, my wise child, come and embrace me, your Father, in you. Thou shalt be heir to my estate and thou shalt not die any death.

I am in your stream of Life like a great fish moving to and fro with silent majesty and sparkling grandeur.

Eat good food—simple, nourishing food,—leave all your cares to me. Then you will sleep and wake up in a vigorous rhythm. Your stream of life will be meandering its wonderful way between them like a divine song. Then you will know me, no—feel me,—the great fish moving to and fro with silent majesty and sparkling grandeur. Thus you will feel happy and prolong your life. When you know me, my dear child, in you, you may want to be with me *always*. Verily, verily, the child wants me, its Divine Father, to be always with it. Poor little thing with no other hope than me! That stage is the *best* in your life!

There are two birds of the same species in the same tree. But the two birds are in reality One but they are two just for fun. The bird which has come down and resides in the lower branches eats fruits, enjoys the breeze; but with all that, it fears the cruel hunter. The bird which is always on the uppermost twig in that tree simply looks on and does nothing. It fears nothing. It is all bliss, bliss everlasting and bliss alone.

My child, there are two—for all your *practical* purposes—things in your body. One is your life and other is *me* in you. That your life and myself in you are encaged in your body is a wonder. Those two are not different from each other. They are one in that One indescribable. They exist as two only for *you* because I have willed it so just for fun.

Your life is the bird in the lower branch of the tree. The other bird in the uppermost twig in the tree is me, your Father. Forgetting everything,

and remembering only me, you, little bird, fly, fly, fly up and reach me with great courage. You will find that I am you and you are me. When once you reach me; I am ever in you and you are ever in me. And there will be only bliss, bliss everlasting.

Well, you fly up with great courage to me and reach me! Then as I have told you, you lose you and gain me and become one everlasting bliss. When you are lost in me, dear child, in your body, of which there is no remembrance to you then, if I, your Father, so desire, I *separate* myself from you. Then I shine in you, just like my Sun shines in the sky. You slowly revert to your position and you are aware of your body. Thenceforward my child sees and feels me *everywhere*. If I so choose, I make that child of mine my own instrument of showing my greatness to you all. Such children of mine are your *saints*.

I don't withdraw my favour to anyone. Ask and thou shalt get it. Take it and thou shalt have it. I don't deny that to anybody.

Come on, my children, here is your great inheritance from me, your Father. Be ye worthy of me, and ye shall be my heirs to my Divine Kingdom. When once you enter it, you cannot come out of it.

So, come to me in you with courage, affection and devotion. Leave everything on my broad shoulders. Come to me, merge in me, and thus become One with me, that One indescribable.

Lose yourself and thou shalt gain myself. Lose the tiny icicle in the vast

ocean and thus become the ocean itself. There is no 'you' then; but the great, profound, mysterious, wonderful 'I', which is known to all as *God* with different names and forms according to your tastes and fancies.

Merge the little mysteries of birth, life and death in the great mystery of me. You yourself will be then the great mystery.

(34)

Oh, you bestowed with highest intellectual acumen, you that dived deep in all the sacred literature of the world, come on and describe me, your Father, and that one great mystery !

You will readily jump up and say that I am only the best and the most profound *idea* that ever human intellect can conceive.

Then I shall ask you as to who you are. Are you a reality ? Tell me where you are, firstly. You that occupy a microscopic place in one of my millions of small toys that I have set spinning in my vast space, just for fun, to call me an idea ? Very good !

You are verily a very, very, very microscopic idea to me. Yes; now, let the little idea dash itself against the great 'idea' and merge itself in it. There is only one vast, profound mystery or 'idea' or what you may call it.

I am the vast beach and you are the sand particle in it. I am the ocean and you are the drop of water in it. I am the vast space and you are the atom there. There is only one uniform thing. There is only one great thing pervading

everywhere and that is that One indescribable.

(35)

To those that are possessed with subtle intellect of the rarest order, I say these:

What are these stars, planets, space, your earth and all you perceive ? Do you perceive all these when you are stuck deep in a dreamless sleep ? If not why not ?

Just as a juggler produces an illusion of dinner, etc., your mind, my wonderful toy, while you are awake, creates all these. When your mind diverges from me, you see these.

So long as your mind functions, the illusion of this mysterious universe of mine, will remain a reality. All 'realities' that have resulted from the working of the mind are thus only temporary. Yes, yes. Everything that you now feel sure of being real, except me that great mystery and source of all, will prove to be unreal when I draw away from you the mind which is but my own creation. *I alone remain when there is no mind.*

So, I alone am real, this universe is unreal. And you that lost the mind in me are not different from me, and I am not different from you. We are one. We are one, that One indescribable.

(36)

Do you know, my child, that mind is life ? And mind alone is this creation, preservation and destruction ?

I have made this mind and mind has made these *everything*; and she pervades everywhere through my grace. Whatever

she does is all fun to me and I love her, my dear little one.

I am everywhere and she is everywhere. Hence we two are in you, my child. The mind has given you the birth, life and death. I simply watch on all these as the witness within you. For it is all fun for me.

(37)

To make the fun of your world thoroughly worthy of my own enjoyment, I have ordered mind to pervade everywhere in varying degrees.

Ah, what a vast range of variety among you, my little children ! Variety, variety, variety ! The wonder of my world has become still more wonderful ! Of course, I like all these varieties among you !

I like your forms, religions, books, battles, and a million other little things with which you differentiate and distinguish each other among you ! And what a jumble you have made in my house ! Very good !

My children, get these well and be on with these !

My dear child, I, your heavenly Father, am the eternal dancer. I not

only dance in complete ecstasy in the vast space of mine, but also make my divine dance in you as well, all simultaneously. For you know that I am capable of doing many wonders.

Yes. I dance in your heart, in your pure heart, whenever I like to do so to gladden you, my own little child.

I dance and dance in full ecstasy. And everything dances with me. Then everywhere there is only bliss, bliss, bliss everlasting. Verily, verily, I am the eternal and master Dancer.

My dear children of immortality, I am your kind, sweet, ever glorious and compassionate mother. How I long to embrace you and kiss you, my dear little ones.

Oh, come to me, leave aside the toys of your play; oh, rush to me; do come to me !

Let me take you up in my long fair arms and raise you up to my lap, seat you there, kiss you fondly and then give you, my fond ones, my milk of eternal wisdom a drop of which is enough for you to merge you in the vast ocean of eternal bliss.

(Concluded)

An assembly which is not adorned by men who are ripe in age and wisdom is no assembly at all; an old man who does not espouse the cause of religion is not really old, although advanced in years; that which is not based on Truth is no religion; and that which has trickery behind it is no truth at all.

—Bhagavân Sri Râmachandra.

Dynamic Hinduism

BY K. S. PARAMESWAR

Hinduism is a religion and religion falls under the category of philosophy. And philosophy is a science of the "Being as being". That is, if at all there is a Being, an Absolute, a Universe or Anything, philosophy scientifically proves that "It is".

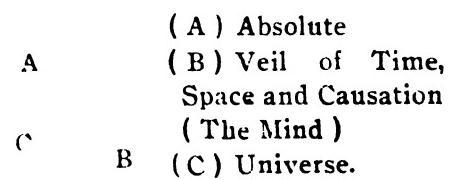
Starting with the hypothesis that there is the Absolute or a Universe existing, without which it is not possible to proceed; because it is impracticable to start from 'nothing' and arrive at 'something', even from the point of view of science, inasmuch as, mathematically, a number of zeros added together will not and cannot give a numerical number or figure and will stand at zero only, (the Śruti asks: "How can existence come out of non-existence ?")—the question arises about the 'how' and 'what' of this existence, of the Absolute or Universe. There cannot be any question of the 'why'; because the 'why' has in the first place no relevancy, just as one suffering from some disease goes into the 'how' and 'what' of the disease and not into the 'why', as in the first place the 'why' cannot be answered and the whole inquiry about anything starts only after the actual happening or the 'is' or 'being' of anything is established.

Now having started with an Existence, Absolute or a Universe, the next question is the 'what' or the 'how' of that; what existed and how existed, whether the one existed first and the other next, or both existed side by side,

and whether they are independent, dependent or interdependent: the actual Truth of all this.

Evidently the starting point is the Absolute or God, the whole which is beyond any limitation and, this Absolute turned into the phenomenal world or universe, the material, the mental and the spiritual world by passing through time, space and causation, the sum total of Mind. That is to say, the "Being has become". This shows that the universe which is the 'becoming' or 'has become' is dependent on the 'Being', the Absolute, and subjects itself to the law of causation, or the Mind, while the Absolute is independent, as it is the Whole and not part like the Universe circumscribed by the veil of Mind.

Mathematically and scientifically also this is true. Because the 'Being' or Absolute is a static thing (a conception) and the becoming or Universe is the change. And mathematically the part is not the whole, while the whole contains the part. (see figure)



Grammatically speaking "The Absolute became the Universe" or "being has become (the Universe)". Here the subject is the Absolute (the

Being) the predicate, the becoming, and the Universe is the object.

So the inference is that the Universe is only a change and, scientifically the 'change has got only a relative existence' i. e., it should change in relation to something static. Since the Universe is the change, the 'becoming', it is evidently clear that the 'Being' or Absolute is that which is static and changeless, relating to which the Universe exists.

Again the change is caused by the Mind (Time, Space and Causation). It is an illusion (Mayā—strictly speaking Mayā is the actual statement of facts) by which the Absolute manifests itself as many, and seems as though there are two existences, Absolute and Universe. But this existence as two is an impossibility. Because there cannot be two independent existences. First of all Time, Space and Causation i. e., the sum total of this, the Mind, is itself a change, like the experiences in a dream, and space cannot exist independently of anything. And the idea of causation is inseparable from time and space. This can be compared to a shadow which though outwardly an existence is at the same time non-existent, as it depends upon something else to cast its shadow.

Still it looks different from the Subject, the Absolute; because, of the name, the idea formed in the Mind, and a form, a combination. At the same time it loses the form though we understand the losing as something destructive, or going to nothingness. This is not true. That which 'is', cannot be destroyed; but only there can be a change of form and place, or going

back to their component parts. It is just like the cause and effect which are one and the same, like the clay and the pot, only clay but different in form. Similarly, when a candle is burnt nothing is lost, but they go back to the component parts or forces.

From this the conclusion is that the change in the Universe is only the going back to the Absolute from which it manifested, or the Absolute absorbs the manifestation. Hence creation is only projection, a coming up when the balance is lost of that which already 'is'; and destruction is only absorption or going back or restoring the balance by dispelling differences and disparities.

The Adwaita Philosophy teaches that only the Absolute or Brahma 'is' and all others are only manifestations of this Brahma—that is to say, Brahma contains everything or all manifestations, like the seed the tree.

The theory that God created the world from Nature is not true. Because we have seen that nature is contained in Brahma or God, just like the web which the spider weaves is already in the spider.

Now taking man, it can be analysed that he is the Ātmā or the Self which is the true 'being', and the body is only the manifestation of this Self or Ātmā. Because the body, consisting of the outward organs, senses, mind, etc., is one depending on another. The organs depend on the senses to carry the message and the senses depend on the mind on which it leaves an impression and the mind depends on the intellect for final orders and all these are chang-

ing. But even this Mind and Intellect change, as we forget the past, and after a sound sleep, although, we know we had slept a sound sleep we do not know what happened and so on. So, although there is complete detachment in sound sleep, there must be something else who must be awake to tell that we were asleep and, that this something is the Ātmā or Self. This Ātmā must be static from the theory of relative existence and must have no change and be independent too. And the others like the mind and other organs should be depending on this Ātmā as they have the change. And so this Ātmā expresses itself through all animates and inanimates, and the appearances are in that Ātmā or Self.

And this Ātmā and the Paramātmā, or Brahma are one and the same, as according to our inference there cannot be two independent existences of the same identity. Just as the spark of the fire is not different from the fire itself as it holds the same properties, force, etc., the Ātmā, that which is behind the animates and inanimates, and Brahma, that which is behind the whole universe cannot be different and must be one and the same.

Further these animates and inanimates are already contained in the Universe and the Universe is contained in Brahma and so there cannot be two independent existences and the two, the Universe and Brahma must be one and the same.

Mathematically the Universe is the total of Brahma (as in the original creation) plus the form and the name

(manifestation) caused by the Mind. And so also all these animates and inanimates are Ātmā and the forms and names. So in both cases Brahma and Ātmā minus the form and the name give us Brahma and Ātmā which should be one and the same, i.e., the force behind all.

Having seen that only Ātmā or Brahma remains and the only true Being, this should be Sat-Chit-Ānanda Swarūpa (Existence, Knowledge, Bliss), Nirguna Swarūpa, Mokṣa Swarūpa, Iśwara Swarūpa and so on. Because the omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience are the actual Lakṣaṇas of Brahma, as we have seen them, who manifests through all, knows all, and is the force behind all. This Brahma is again beyond all Gunas or colourless, and the outward different conditions we see are only Upalakṣaṇas or super-impositions. Just as in the case of hot water, the heat is only a super-imposition or Upalakṣaṇa, as after some time it again becomes cold without the help of anything even so all the outward appearances and conditions of Brahma are only extraneous forces affecting temporarily. And just as one or the other of the rope or snake idea vanishes, the moment the truth is known, all these Upalakṣaṇas vanish or disappear when the real Ātmā or Brahma is realized.

Again, the Ātmā is Iśwaraswarūpi, because it rules over all. And as to Muktaswarūpi, it is always free and stands detached. Like the sun covered by the clouds, caused by the heat of the sun in vapour form, the Guṇas born of Nature, which is only the manifestation of the Ātmā itself, apparently cover the Ātmā. And the moment the wind of

knowledge acts, the cloud of nature disappears, leaving the sun of Ātmāshine again.

The theory that God stood separately and made the Universe out of Nature is not quite correct, because the potter making a pot out of clay, according to the law of adhesion, is not different from the clay, but permeates the pot.

If the whole phenomena of creation is analysed, it will be seen that Akṣara, Vāyu, Fire, Water and Earth that are the component parts of this world are

interdependent, and ultimately dependent on the Akṣara or Brahma. This is a scientific theory, as the one is the basis of the other from the point of view of creation.

Hinduism, which is built on the laws of Sanātana Dharma, besides giving a crystal clear idea of all these, lays down ways and means as to how to get at the root of all and finally realize God, or Brahma and attain Eternal Freedom. The truths enunciated by other religions are all contained in Hinduism, hence Hinduism is the dynamic Religion.

Five Specifics for Self-Purification—IV

Second Series

(Continued from the previous number)

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

PURITY OF ARTICLES OF FOOD

Vessels in which articles of food, such as flour, pulses, ghee, spices etc., are kept in the pantry should be cleaned before they are used and all articles should be kept under cover, so that rats may not enter them and make them filthy. The filth and urine of rats contain dangerous poison. When vessels are kept open other germ-carrying animals may enter them and make them filthy.

Uncooked articles of food should be kept in the sun every now and then. Food should be prepared only out of articles which have been thoroughly cleared of all rubbish in them.

Fingers should not be thrust into vessels containing milk, ghee or pickles

for the poison in the finger-nails may mix with their contents. Pickles, etc., should be kept in the sun every now and then.

Vessels containing cooked articles of food should not be left uncovered. Curd, milk, sweets and the like should be kept in latticed shelves, so that flies may not get at them.

Covers of cooking vessels are often taken out during cooking and serving food and are generally placed on the ground. The steam-wet bottom of the covers easily contract germs and particles of dust from the ground and when they are again placed on the vessels, the food inside is spoiled. So whenever a cover is taken out of a cooking vessel, it should be placed on a clean plate and should be

carefully cleaned before being placed on the vessel.

Similarly, the spoon used in serving vegetables, pulses, rice, etc., should be cleaned before being used and should not be laid on the ground.

The vessel containing drinking water should be cleaned and washed every day and the water should be filtered before filling up the vessel. Pure drinking water should be always kept covered.

On the conclusion of a meal Āchamana (sipping of water three times) should be performed and the thumb of the right hand should be moved on the lips.

It is good for health to abstain from drinking water during a meal. But if this is not possible, a little quantity may be taken in between the courses. It is preferable to drink water an hour or half-an-hour after a meal.

When taking meal in a company, one should not leave one's seat before others. In case one is used to finish his meal rather swiftly he should follow the companion who is slow in eating. For otherwise the latter will be embarrassed and will try either to finish his meal hastily or will go without the full quantity of food.

Nothing touched or served by the hand of a suspect should ever be eaten.

HELPFUL AND HARMFUL HABITS AFTER MEAL

After meal, the teeth should be perfectly cleaned so that no particle of food is left inside them. Particles of food deposited within teeth get decom-

posed there and cause diseases of the teeth. If there are spaces between the teeth, all deposits of food therein should be picked out with a tooth-pick.

While rinsing the mouth, water should be sprinkled over the eyes ten to fifteen times, filling the mouth with water. The habit improves vision and removes the danger of eye-diseases.

After meal, it is good to move the palm of the wet hands over the eyes, and to comb the hair. The first of these practices improves the eye-sight, and the second removes rheumatism. During combing, the teeth of the comb should touch the scalp of the head. The comb should be made of ordinary wood or sandal, but not of rubber.

After meal one should make it a point to walk a hundred paces and also make water. Warming the feet after meal by the ashes of a fire-place is also considered conducive to health.

Running, physical exercise, swimming, bath, warming at a fire, riding, copulation, and heavy work immediately after meal are all very injurious to health. Sedentary habit after meal fattens the stomach, running increases wind and causes colic and feeding immediately after a regular meal brings one face to face with death. After meal, one should walk a hundred paces, then lie down flat with the face upwards, then lie on the left side. One should not go to sleep immediately after a meal. Sleep immediately after a meal interferes with digestion and causes indigestion.

Even at night, one should not sleep immediately after taking meal. Before

retiring to bed one should study sacred scriptures and remember God.

REGULATION OF SEXUAL LIFE

Copulation is permissible only during the fortnight after the wife's menses. Except the first four nights of the menses and the eighth, new moon, fourteenth and full moon nights of the Hindu calendar, the remaining eight nights are considered proper for coition. Out of these, again, the days of Śrāddha and other religious observances and vows have to be omitted, so that not more than two nights are really available. Coition is not permissible when the wife is ill, cheerless, suffering, full of grief, full of anger, malicious, hungry or overfed. A man answering this description is also unfit for copulation. A woman in her menses or in the state of pregnancy is wholly debarred from coition. Coition with a woman in her menses destroys power of thought, energy, strength, power of vision and longevity. A courtyard, a place of pilgrimage, a shrine, a cow house, a burning ground or cemetery, a garden, a stream, tank or well and a public place should never be used for sexual union. Mornings and evenings should never be devoted to such purpose. There should be no copulation restraining the call of nature. One should keep aloof from another's wife even by mind and speech. Attachment to another's wife brings disaster both in this world and the world hereafter. It shortens life and throws one after death into the agonies of hell.

Sexual union is permitted only for begetting progeny, and never for the

false sense of happiness produced by the satisfaction of the senses.

HOW TO BEHAVE WITH WOMEN

A man of right conduct should always keep himself aloof from women. He should not see a woman sneezing, coughing, gaping, or sitting freely and carelessly or in a nude state. If it ever becomes necessary to go to the womens' quarters, he should not go silently, but should distinctly and repeatedly utter the name of Nārāyaṇa or any other divine name, so that the women may beware. Any part of a woman's body specially the face should never be looked at. If he ever happens to look at them he must feel abashed and repentant. If he has to see any woman, he should go accompanied by some friend of good character, or by his own mother or sister. To move in the midst of women, to loiter about them, to talk with them, to sing and play with them, to laugh and cough in a vulgar way, to clap hands, wink and hint at them by men between themselves, or to indulge in jests, all these are very improper ways of behaving with women. Another's wife should be honoured and regarded as the mother. The friend's wife, the teacher's wife, the queen and the mother-in-law have to be regarded as one's own mother. The brother-in-law's wife and the sister-in-law have to be regarded as sisters. One should neither quarrel nor enter into any discussion or argument with women. If a female shop-keeper is young, one should avoid going to her for any purchase. If compelled to take bath in the presence of women, one should feel abashed and be careful. Women should not be hated. The wife should be

regarded as a friend. A woman begging for alms should not be humiliated, she should be honoured by all means. A widow should be honoured and helped as a Sannyasini and should be made happy. Do not enter the habitation of an unchaste woman nor talk with her. Do not look at feminine pictures, now attend cinema-shows where the limbs of women are exposed to the public gaze. Never live in privacy with women. Even one's sister and daughter, if they are young, should not be unnecessarily visited in their seclusion. Correspondence with young women should not be encouraged.

Thought of women is harmful to physical and mental health.

SLEEP

Before going to bed one should wash one's hands and feet and rub them dry. Thus refreshing oneself one should get into the bed. The sleeping chamber must be clean with sufficient openings for light and ventilation. Portraits of Divine forms should hang on the wall. The room should be fragrant with perfumes. The bedstead should be neither small, nor broken, nor unequally levelled, nor dirty. It should be free of bugs, lice and other worms. It should be covered by a clean bed-sheet. While lying on bed the head should be placed either towards the east or the south, and never towards the north or the west. The last habit brings diseases. Before going to bed one should ease oneself by answering the calls of nature. Before falling to sleep one should meditate on God and lie on the side. If there are mosquitos, a mosquito-net should be

used. Six to seven hours of sleep is sufficient for a man of normal health. When practised, one may get refreshed even with less hours of sleep.

One should not sleep in a nude state. Man and woman should not sleep on the same bed. Two men should not go to sleep covering themselves with a single sheet.

One should not read in a lying posture placing the light towards the head. A burning lantern should not be kept in the sleeping chamber. Charcoal fire and burning lantern should never be both kept in a bed-room. Their combination produces a poisonous gas which kills the man in sleep.

While sleeping, the mouth should not be kept under cover nor should there be socks at one's feet. One should not sleep with all windows of the room closed. One should go to bed early and rise early.

The bed-room should not be filled up with all sorts of things. It should always be kept clean and the bed should be exposed to the sun from time to time in order to keep it free from bugs, fleas and lice.

RULES OF GENERAL CONDUCT

One should wear clothes according to family tradition and custom of the society to which one may belong. No harmless convention of society should be transgressed.

Every guest should be honoured. A householder should never allow his guest to depart without service by him in the form of providing the guest with food, lodge and other comforts.

If there is previous intimation about the arrival of a distinguished guest, one should go to receive him at the station and bring him with proper respects. Arrangements should be made to make his stay comfortable.

When a guest comes suddenly without previous intimation one should at once stand up and receive the visitor enthusiastically. He should be offered the best place to sit and arrangements for his lodging and food should be made according to one's circumstances. All possible care should be taken for his comforts and conveniences. Information about his preferences and habits of food, etc., should be gathered from his attendant, if he has one, for it is always a delicate matter to discuss these things face to face. If he has no attendant, the guest himself should be humbly approached in the matter. At the time of the guest taking his meal, the host should attend on him and serve the dish himself. The host should not take food before the guest is fed. When a guest leaves a host dissatisfied or offended, he takes away with him the Dharma of the host.

Whenever one is visited by a man superior to him in age, knowledge, intellectual attainment, glory, wealth, social status and virtues etc., one should stand up to do him honour and welcome him by offering him the best place to sit and speak to him with humility.

Hair, nails and beard should not be allowed to grow abnormally. Shaving should be done by a trusted barber. It is good to keep one's own shaving set. Before the barber is allowed to shave, he should be made to wash his instruments.

One's own cup should be used for holding water used to soften the beard before a shave.

Shaving should not be done after taking a meal. The eighth, eleventh, fourteenth and fifteenth days of the lunar month should be avoided for the purpose of shaving.

One should not look at the rising and setting sun. One should neither pass over the rope of a bound calf, nor run during the rains, nor see one's face reflected in water.

A mound of earth, a cow, an image of god, a Brahman, ghee, honey, big peepal and other deified trees should be kept towards the right when passing them.

A man carrying a load, a woman in the state of pregnancy, an invalid, an aged, a chaste woman, elderly persons, learned persons and noble and high-souled men should be courteously allowed to pass when one happens to meet them on the way. Food, fire, spittle and bone should never be crossed by stepping over them.

Any person engaged in taking food, bath or medicine and in washing the filth of a child should not be asked to do something else than the work in hand.

Never keep a fire below a bedstead. The rainbow in the sky should not be pointed to another.

Excrement, wine, spittle, other unholly or impure things, leavings of food, blood, poison, glass, etc., should never be thrown into a pond or well. Never take any delicious food without

distributing it to others. A suckling calf should not be forcibly removed from the mother-cow.

One should not live in a place inhabited by irreligious men, or infected by contagious diseases.

The feet should not be washed in a vessel of bell-metal. Do not needlessly move your limbs. Activities like unnecessarily breaking clods of earth to pieces, scratching the ground, or tearing straws are very harmful.

Shoes, clothes, ritual threads, jewels or garlands worn by others should not be used.

Do not gamble. Do not walk with shoes in hands.

Do not take bhāng, gānjā or charas and never drink wine.

Do not make fun excessively, do not accuse anybody, do not utter words which may pierce others.

Do not sit on hair, ashes, bones, broken tiles, cotton seeds or husk of rice. Sitting on these shortens length of life.

Behave always kindly with servants. Help them by all means in their days of illness and distress. Never look down upon them.

Do not sit in company with the fallen, the Chāndāla, the cobbler, the fool, the proud, the juggler, the ungrateful, the indolent, vile men, the thief, the robber, the impure and the enemy.

Do not scratch your head by both hands. Do not touch your head with the hand with which food has been taken. Do not spit anywhere indifferently, the

handkerchief used in removing the spittle from the lips should be washed every day regularly. Do not use handkerchief used by others.

Serve your parents and the teacher daily and obey them. Perform the Śraddha ceremony of your ancestors.

Do not consciously cross the shadows of an image of God, of your father, elders and teachers, of the King, the Snātaka, the preceptor, the black cow and the man initiated at a sacrifice, and also of a Chāndāla.

Walk with your eyes fixed on the way, do not talk while passing, do not knock against anybody in a crowd; if through carelessness you knock against somebody, beg his pardon. Do not take offence if you yourself are knocked against.

Do not stand on a cross road at noon, at midnight, after a meal in connection with a Śraddha ceremony and in the morning and evening twilight.

Knowingly do not stand on the paste rubbed on the body for removing impurities, on water left after bath, on filth and blood, on spittle and vomit.

An enemy, collaborators of the enemy, irreligious men, greedy and licentious persons, theives and women should not be associated with.

Never ask for a thing on loan from anybody. When compelled to take it, always take the greatest care to return it to the owner. If the thing is in any way impaired, get it repaired without even consulting the owner.

Do not take another's money however small it may be. Never speak

bitterly. Never speak an untruth even though sweet and always avoid speaking the truth which is unpalatable.

Never entertain fondness for another's wife, for money belonging to others and feelings of enmity against another.

When you are a guest at somebody's house, always take care not to place your host in a delicate position by your act or conduct. Cut down your needs, so that he may not be put to any trouble on your account. Look to his convenience and act accordingly.

Never befriend an enemy of the people, a man fallen or insane, a man with many enemies, a tyrant, a prostitute, the husband of an unchaste woman, a vagabond, a liar, a spendthrift, a backbiter and a wicked man.

Do not rub teeth against teeth nor clean the nostrils with the ends of fingers. Do not put a straw into the ears. Do not pick teeth with a pin, needle or knife. Do not gape, cough or gasp with your mouth closed. Do not cut nails with the teeth.

Do not pluck with hand the hair of the moustache, of the brow or of the eyelids. Do not make a loud laugh. Do neither break a straw nor write on the ground. Do not chew the hair of the moustache and the beard. Do not rub a clod of earth against another. Do not see the evil stars. Always guard yourself against animals with tusks and horns, against frost and wind blowing in the face and against the sun above the head. Do not take a bath or perform Āchamana in a naked state.

Do not quarrel with anybody, high or low. Do not aggravate any dissension. Abandon all needless enmity. It is better to suffer loss than to be a party to a quarrel. Even the gain accruing from a quarrel should be given up.

Putting one leg on another is not a good practice. Do not stretch your legs before an elder. If one has to pass through an assembly of men, one should bend low with the right hand extended, as if one were asking for the way to pass.

One should not get up and leave the meeting before it is over. If one is unwell or apprehends a sudden call of nature, he should be careful to take his seat not in the midst of the assembly but somewhere at the end. He should not talk while the meeting is proceeding, nor raise any laughter.

Every honoured man of acquaintance happening to meet you on the way must be offered reverential salutation before he offers his own salutation to you.

If you are required to go to a forest at night, you should go with a staff or stick in hand. Put on shoes when going out. Keep an umbrella with you during the rains and when going out in the sun. If you are accompanied by somebody who has no umbrella, you should offer your umbrella to him. If he refuses, you should bring him under the protection of your own umbrella.

Do not annoy any person, who is either one-eyed, hump-backed, possessed of six fingers, illiterate, old, ugly, poor or of low caste, by calling him so.

Do not touch a cow, a Brahman or the fire without washing your mouth after

taking food, or without bath after answering the calls of nature. Do not touch the lower limbs of your body without reason.

Serve all beings with whatever little you possess. Do not hurt and terrorize any being nor make him unhappy. Do ill to none deliberately. Be not cruel to birds and animals, nor allow any cruelty to them by others. Render service to distressed animals and induce others to render service to them.

Help one who has lost his way and show it to him. Speak with sympathy to one who wants you to show him the way.

Speak mildly to those who are poor and distressed and help them to the best of your ability.

When the train is about to start, never obstruct those who are trying to enter the carriage. Do not mislead them by saying that there were vacant seats in other compartments. Do not enter a crowded carriage and add to the hardship of those who are already seated there. If there is time find out a comparatively less crowded compartment.

If you find a patient, a woman, an old man or children standing in the train for want of space, offer your place to them and go standing in their stead. If they want to sleep, give them place to sleep and keep up the night yourself. Try to make as far as possible all your fellow-passengers comfortable, but pay particular attention to those mentioned above.

If the carriage is crowded and you have money to pay for a comfortable

place, purchase a higher class ticket and travel comfortably. It is good to be thrifty, but bad to be a miser.

Do not spit in a railway carriage. Spit outside the compartment. Do not pour water inside the carriage. If you want to wash your hands, put them outside the window bending them downwards and do the washing. Take care that passengers occupying seats in the rear may not suffer because of the water thrown by you.

Observe scrupulously the rules of right conduct yourself and teach the children by your example. Children cannot be made virtuous by the rule of the rod. Be virtuous yourself and the children will follow suit.

Never talk about other's failings, nor think of them. Do not point out the defects in others to anybody.

Do not become a party to a quarrel arising between members of the family. Do not talk to them, or to anybody, about it. For if you support the one side, the other will be displeased with you. If possible, hear both the sides and settle the dispute. Domestic as well as neighbourly quarrels should be settled even if it may cost you some expense, over and above the time devoted to it, if you have means to meet the expense.

Do not help liars in the attempt to make their falsehood appear as truth. It will make you lose your credit.

Do not turn your face from the poor and consider all help to a sinner and a tyrant as sin itself. Do not speak ill of any religion or any conception of God. Help another in his religious observance

to the best of your ability (if such observance is not sinful according your own religion).

Think of only doing good, and actually try to do good in his days of distress even to one who did you ill. Do not wish ill to anybody, nor do any evil deliberately out of a selfish motive.

Out of greed do not earn money by sinful means. It is a sin to earn money by cheating or deceiving others, by theft or by unjustly usurping what by right belongs to others. Wealth acquired by sinful means has a very tragic end, although for a time it may make a show of conferring happiness and bring about progress.

By body, speech or mind do not do anything which may cause adversity and fall to anybody. If a person commits a wrong by mistake under pressure of circumstances, and if he admits it with a repentant heart, he should certainly be embraced to one's heart. He should be treated with sympathy and made to abandon the wrong course and take to the right one. He should neither be hated, nor his guilt should be advertised.

Do not humiliate a poor relative but honour him the more. In an assembly of caste brothers on occasions like a marriage, the poor friend should not be ignored. In every function which he joins, particular care should be shown to him so that he may have no cause to feel offended. Keep him with you when you are being accorded a welcome. Do not ignore him because he is poor.

Do not interrupt when two persons are engaged in a conversation.

Do not try to overhear them. Do not read other's letters nor try to find out their confidential contents. Do not hurriedly do any work. Think out all the pros and cons of what is to be done, the result to follow and your capacity to do it and then begin the work. Once it is begun, the work should be carried out with all your heart and soul and made a success. Do not feel depressed or tired.

Whenever you desire to say something about a person, express yourself after you have thought the matter fully. Do not utter any word about him behind his back although true to the letter, which you can not utter in his presence. Words which you are ashamed to utter in the presence of others, should not even enter your mind.

Do not upset a man by reminding him of his hidden sin or defect nor exploit him for your own selfish purpose by threat of exposure.

Do not be angry when you hear your defects, nor feel elated when you hear your praise. Be happy when you hear others' virtues and take no interest in hearing their vices. At heart always discard the desire for respect and honour. Do not enter into any controversy or academic discussion with anybody. If in the course of a discussion you notice that the opponent was losing ground, you should at once skilfully stop the discussion so that men around you may not detect that it was stopped because the ground of the opponent was untenable.

Do not humiliate anybody, even if he may be your son, pupil or servant.

Do not give your word of honour to anybody, and once given carry it out with care and unshakable resolution. Do not betray your word. If anyone fails to fulfil a promise because of his peculiar circumstances, do not feel displeased with him.

Do not make a gift, disgracing and hating the man who receives it. After giving a gift, do not remind anybody of having given it. Do not in any way exploit the man to whom the gift has been given. Do not press him to support your claims. Render help and service with a perfect understanding, with no base motive of pressing him arrogantly or lowering him in the estimation of others or exploiting him for any selfish purpose.

To find employment for the unemployed is to render him a great service. At the time of division of property among brothers or partners nothing should be withheld or concealed. There should be no desire to get more than one's actual share. And if one gets it, he should not accept it.

Do not take a loan so long as you can do without it. If, however, you cannot get on without it, borrow as much as you can easily repay. Take care to pay it off as early as possible. With regard to a debtor, you should not harass him if you find that his economic condition is bad enough and that he is utterly incapable of paying the debt. Nobody's dwelling house should ever be put to auction.

Never undertake a work in doing which you have to depend on others and seek financial assistance from others.

Who does not err in this world ? If your subordinates or servants err, do not be angry with them, do not curse or speak ill of them and brand them with their errors. Tolerating their mistakes advise them in a spirit of love so as to create peace and cheerfulness in them and a state of mind in which they may become less liable to err. God alone is above error.

Serve a patient with a sincere heart. Let him not feel that he is becoming a burden on you, or that you are placing him under an obligation. The bed-sheets and garments of the patient should be changed every day. He should be listened to with sympathy. Medicine should be administered to him at the right time. Article of food which the patient has to abstain from should never be brought before him nor eaten by the server nor talked about in his presence. It should be considered a privilege to serve him. The spittle, pus, etc., of the patient should be deeply buried in the earth. Cloths with stains of spittle, pus, etc. should be immediately washed with soap and hot water. The cloth used for removing blood should be at once burnt.

God is always present with you. He sees all your acts, even the most hidden thoughts of your mind. You can never conceal anything from Him. Do not forget this.

God is our helper, he is always ready to protect us. He is ready to take upon himself the burden of protecting what we possess and bringing to us what we should possess. Never let your mind stray from this truth.

Practise the Japa and chanting of God's name, sing and listen to His virtues and the vastness of His glory, think of his divine Nature and Form, meditate on Him. Do all this yourself and try in a spirit of love to make others do the same. No virtue is higher than that of helping a soul to tread the spiritual path and turn him Godward.

The Supreme Self, or God Himself, is Sat, (Truth or Right). To live in

him is Sadāchāra, or right conduct, in the strict sense of the term. Forgetfulness of God is the reverse of right conduct. So dedicate as perfectly as you can your body, mind and wealth to God and regarding all these as His possessions do all works with power given by Him, under His guidance and for His sake. This, in a nutshell, is the supreme discipline of Sadāchāra.

(To be continued)

Supreme Peace Through Knowledge of God

BY JAYADAYAL GOVANDKA

God is the soul of all that exists. He is all-pervading, the knower of every heart; therefore service to all creatures is the same as service to God. He who understands this, having known the truth about God, may realize God. It should, however, be borne in mind that he who knows God in this manner, when he serves any person worthy of service, or worships a person worthy of worship, regards such service and worship as having been rendered to God Himself and derives as much joy and peace from the same as one may derive from the service and worship of God. Like king Rantideva, he perfectly understands that manifesting Himself in different forms, it is God Himself who accepts the charity, sacrifice, service, and worship offered to Him with love by His dear devotee.

King Rantideva was the grandson of King Nara and son of King Sankṛti. His glory has spread over both the

regions of heaven and earth. On one occasion having given away all possessions in charity the king and his family, unable to procure food for want of money, were reduced to mere skeletons through starvation. For forty-eight days at a stretch they could find no water to drink, much less any food. The whole royal family went on starving. The skeleton of the virtuous king began to tremble oppressed by hunger and thirst. On the forty-ninth day he obtained some quantity of rice boiled in milk mixed with clarified butter, a sweetmeat prepared of flour, clarified butter and sugar and water to drink. But when the king and his family were about to partake of this food, a Brahman guest appeared before him. The king who saw God in every being, welcomed the Brahman with due respect and reverence and entertained him with food. After taking his meal, the Brahman went away. The king, then, thought of dividing the balance of food into equal

share among all members of the family and partaking of the same, when another guest, who was Śūdra by caste, appeared on the scene. Remembering Śrī Hari, the king fed this guest also with a part of the balance of food. On the departure of the Śūdra guest, a third guest appeared accompanied by a dog and said, "O king, I and my dog are hungry. Please give us food." The king welcomed him as well, and fed him and his dog with due respect with what food was left over. Now, he had in stock only as much water as could remove the thirst of a single person. When the king was about to drink it, a Chāndāla appeared on the scene piteously crying, "O great king, I am terribly exhausted, please give me a little water to drink, fallen as I am". Hearing his plaintive appeal and finding him really exhausted, the king was overtaken with compassion, and though himself about to die of thirst, he gave away the water to the new comer. In order to test the virtue of the king, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Mahadeva, these three gods came before king Rantideva, assuming through illusion the forms of Brahman and others. Observing the fortitude and generosity of the king they were all extremely pleased and assuming their own forms appeared before the king. King Rantideva bowed before those three forms, which were, in fact, Gods' own forms in different aspects. And though they were so greatly pleased, the king did not seek any boon from them. Renouncing attachment and desire, he fixed his mind only on Vāsudeva. Owing to his absorption in God, Māya consisting of the three Gunas (Sattva, Raja and Tama) disappeared from his presence like a dream.

Through association with Rantideva, the members of his family became devotees of Nārāyaṇa and attained the supreme state realized by Yogīs.

God is almighty, omniscient and far superior to both the perishable (bodies) and the imperishable (Jīvātmā). He is the supreme Lord of all lords of creation, and the Master of infinite number of universes. There is none greater than He in all the world. When people come to know Him as such, they worship Him alone and no other, for the Lord Himself says:—

यो मामेवमसंमूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।
स सर्वविद्जति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥

(Gītā XV. 19)

"O Arjuna, the undeluded person who knows Me as the Supreme Being knows everything, and worships Me with all his being."

The fact is well-known in the world that man accepts whatever he considers to be the best. Suppose a king being pleased with the service of a poor but very devoted servant, who always makes it a point to adjust himself to the liking of his Master, decides to make a gift. He has heaps of coal, gravel, stone, etc., on side, on another there are heaps of copper, iron, brass and other metals; at one place there was a heap of silver and silver coins, and at another gold and gold coins and there was one particular place where diamonds, emeralds, sapphires, rubies and other precious stones were stored. Now, addressing the servant, the king said that from morning till evening he could carry away as much of anything he liked among those things. Now, the reader may

himself imagine, will any man possessing his senses waste a single moment in carrying loads of gravel and stones, leaving the precious gems alone? Never. Then, why should the devotee, who has knowledge of God's Truth, mystery, glory and virtues, leave the precious gems in the form of Bhajana and meditation and waste a single moment of his life in accumulating worldly possessions in the form of gravel and stones. If he devotes any part of his valuable time in the enjoyment of the transient things of the world, leaving God alone, the repository of Bliss, it should be a clear indication of the fact that he has not understood the great glory and mystery of almighty God, the Supreme Lord of all.

The friend of the poor, the redeemer of the fallen, and omniscient God is an ocean of all virtues. He is the very image of Grace and Love. He who knows the truth about these virtues of God gets rid of all fear and comes to possess unlimited joy and peace. Now, the question may be raised, if God is an image of Grace and Love, His infinite grace should fall on all; if so, why do we fail to get happiness and peace? The answer to this is, the Lord is no doubt the very ocean of Grace, and this Grace falls on all, but the fact is we have no faith in it! The Lord's Grace on all beings is so great that it transcends our imagination. His compassion for Jivas is much greater than all the tenderness we may imagine in the world, but unaware of its truth and glory we do not believe in it, that is why we remain deprived of its eternal and infinite fruit, viz., attainment of happiness and peace. Though divine

Grace falls on all Jivas in a general way, man being specially qualified for liberation from bondage is a special object of Grace. And among men, again, he who knows the secret and glory of Grace possesses a still better qualification. For instance, the sun's rays fall on every object, but they are reflected better in the glass and still better in the sun-stone, which acquires power from the sun to burn an object like a piece of cloth. Thus, though the Lord's Grace falls equally on all Jivas, the person who particularly knows the secret and glory of that Grace succeeds with its help in reducing all sins and troubles to ashes. The more a man realizes the truth and glory of divine Grace, the more he gets rid of sorrow, vice and sin with the result that becoming fearless and free of care he attains supreme peace and supreme bliss.

Suppose there was a virtuous and wise king, who had a natural feeling of compassion for his subjects, but all people were unaware of this. Through his ministers and secret service men he used to keep himself in touch with his helpless and poor subjects and send them aid according to the requirement of each particular case. In his capital there was a boy of the Kṣatriya caste, who was extremely polite by nature, possessed of virtuous conduct, wise and clever and had reverence for the king. His parents died leaving him an orphan child. The boy had heard from his parents and had gained the knowledge from them that the king of the state was an extremely kind-hearted king and a protector of the poor. Therefore, when his parents died he was not overtaken by

as much anxiety as he ought to have been under the circumstance. He had a conviction that the compassionate king will of his own accord make some arrangement for his maintenance. The boy was reading in a school. When his fellow-students found that though an orphan, he was without any anxiety, they questioned, "Your parents are dead, who will now look after you?" The boy replied, "Our king is a compassionate king, he will himself make all the necessary arrangements for me." The secret service men reported this talk to the king. Thereupon, the king asked his ministers to make an enquiry. The ministers unanimously reported: "The boy is exceptionally beautiful, polite, virtuous, intelligent and devoted to the king. His parents are dead, therefore he is now wholly helpless. He has none to look after him except His Majesty." The king queried, "What arrangements should be made for him?" The ministers replied, "That depends on His Majesty's wish." The king passed an order that the expenses of the boy's maintenance and education should be borne by the state and a house was to be erected for him at state expense. The king's generosity delighted the ministers. When the report of the royal favour was brought to the boy, his joy knew no bounds. His devotion for the king increased all the more, and together with it his faith grew double or even fourfold.

One day when the boy was at school, a fellow-student of his, who had love for him, asked him in a spirit of complaint: "Brother, what has been your guilt that the sepoys of the king are demolishing your cottage?" Delighted at the

question, the boy replied, "O brother, the king is extremely kind to me. It is possible my cottage is being demolished with a view to erect a good residence for me." The secret service men carried this reply also to the king. The king's love for the boy now grew all the more. One day summoning all his ministers, the king said, "You all know that I am getting old. I have no issue. Whom shall I install as the Crown Prince?" The ministers replied, "Whoever is considered fit for the honour may be installed by His Majesty." The king said, "In my opinion, the orphan Kṣatriya boy, whom you have always praised before me, is the fittest person to hold this position. Please tell me whether you approve of the proposal." All the ministers unanimously exclaimed, "Yes, Lord, it is an excellent proposal. From every point of view, he is qualified for the position. We also considered him to be best suited for this high honour." On the advice of his ministers, the king finally decided to make the boy his successor to the throne. This report spread among the high dignitaries of the state. One day some high officers of the state came to see the boy at his residence. The boy welcomed them all with proper courtesy and respect. The officers said, "His Majesty the king looks upon you with very great favour." The boy replied, "I know it well that I am the recipient of very great favour from His Majesty; that is why he has arranged for my food, clothes, education and has built this house for me." The officers again said, "That is not all, the king is extremely pleased with you, you cannot imagine the extent of his pleasure on you." Thereupon, the boy asked, "Has

His Majesty decided to bear also the expenses of my marriage?" The officers replied, "That is a small matter, the king looks upon you with exceptionally great favour." The boy, again, asked, "Does His Majesty desire to make a gift of some villages to me?" The officers replied, "This is also nothing". The boy asked, "Has the king decided to give me a big Jagir of, say, ten to twenty villages?" The officers replied, "The king's favour on you far surpasses even that." The boy said, "I cannot imagine anything surpassing this favour, be kind enough to tell me what it is?" The officers replied, "What shall we say? We always solicit your kind favour on us." The boy said, "Please do not say so. I am an humble servant of you all; it is because of your kind favour that I have earned the favour of His Majesty, the king. Please tell me something special about the generosity of our great king." The officers replied, "We have already said that we solicit your kind favour. Have you not understood the implication of what we said?" The boy said, "Kindly tell me plainly what you intend to say?"

How was it possible for that poor boy to imagine that the king had decided to make him the successor to the throne and install him as the Crown Prince? The officers exclaimed, "His Majesty has selected you as our Crown Prince". Full of wonder, the boy ejaculated, "Me, as Crown Prince!" The officers replied, "Yes, Sir. His Majesty has been pleased to select you as the successor to the throne."

The boy's joy now knew no limits. He kept mute through sheer intensity of emotion.

This is only an illustration. In order to understand the implication of the story, the underlying parallelism should be grasped. The king in the story is God Himself, the practicant is the orphan Kṣatriya boy, devotion to God is the spirit of loyalty to the king, arrangement for the wherewithal of the practicant is the same as arrangement for the boy's food, clothing, residence, etc. God-realized souls are ministers of the state. Aspirants to salvation possessed of the divine qualities are the high dignitaries. The position of a Kāraka Puruṣa, attained by the highest of devotees, is the position of the Crown Prince.

Thus the practicant, who realizing the infinite grace of God, our supreme Father, feels delighted with all his dispensations, at every step, becomes qualified to attain the imperishable state of the Crown Prince of God.

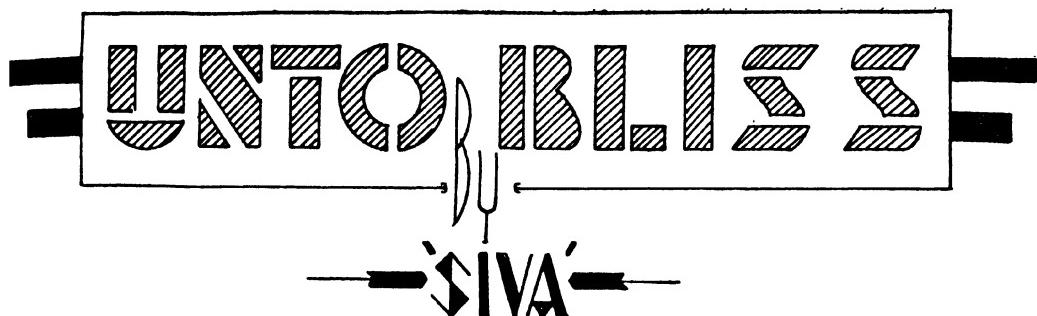
Therefore, we should make every attempt to know God, who is all pervading, knower of every heart, almighty, supremely compassionate and everybody's friend together with His form, glory and virtues, for the realization of supreme peace and supreme bliss. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*—

मोक्षारं यज्ञतपसीं सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम्।
सुखं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिसृच्छति ॥

(V. 29)

"Having known Me as the enjoyer of sacrifices and austerities, the great Lord of all the worlds, and as the friend of all beings, My devotee attains peace."

(To be continued)



Remember : Of all impurities of the mind, the blackest, the most sticking is the sense of I, or the Ego. It is not easily eradicated. Continuous hard labour is necessary to get over it. So long as this sense persists, spiritual effort cannot attain fruition. Even the slightest assertion of this sense frustrates all the progress made. The Ego is destroyed through renunciation of the idea of personal glory, or personal greatness. What does man really possess on which he can pride himself ? If there is any trace of greatness anywhere it belongs to God. He who out of ignorance usurps that greatness, and tries to arrogate it to himself becomes a victim of Ego. And wherever the germ of Ego springs up, all virtue comes to an end—‘अहङ्काराद्वरस्यामे तदा पुण्यं न तिष्ठति’

Remember : Apart from God, there is none whose support can remove all your difficulties, root and branch. This is true even to the extent that if a man engaged in spiritual practice

believes that he will overcome his difficulties with the strength of discipline followed by him, he commits a mistake. God alone is the dispeller of difficulties. With faith in His motiveless, infinite Grace, and taking shelter under His Grace, one should engage oneself in spiritual practice.

Remember : God is full of blessings and auspiciousness, whatever dispensation He has made for you is full of good for you. If you do not welcome that dispensation with pleasure, know it for certain that you are an extremely unfortunate soul. You are a man of small understanding. Where do you possess the intellect with which you can truly judge what is good and what is evil for you ? That is why God, who is an ocean of compassion as well as omniscient, has taken upon Himself the entire responsibility for you. Your only function now is to surrender yourself to His blessed feet, and shedding all fear and anxiety to welcome with

delight every situation ordained by Him.

Remember : He whose heart is narrow, who burns at the sight of another's prosperity, fame, possessions, peace and growth, who derives pleasure from another's loss, can neither advance in the spiritual path, nor ever enjoy true happiness. Therefore, abandoning these petty and low thoughts, make the heart wide. Feel delighted knowing your own growth lying in another's growth, your own good in another's good, your own prosperity in another's prosperity, and ever seek with a sincere heart that all beings in the world may attain true prosperity, fame, possessions, growth, happiness and peace.

Remember : Whenever any danger threatens you, God, the dispeller of dangers, stands behind you for your protection. The dense darkness you scan in front of you is nothing but your

own shadow. Look to God, the embodiment of Supreme Light, who stands ever ready with outstretched arms to lock you up in His bosom and make you eternally happy.

Remember : All beings merged in Prakṛti, the very form of modifications and change, are subject to error. Some form of evil exists in all, whether more or less. However great may be the extent of your goodness, you are not wholly faultless. Therefore, do not attempt to detect another's fault. If inadvertently you detect it, do not speak ill of him. Try to discover whether the same defect lies in you. Repent for it, if it is there and try to get rid of it. Know it for certain that the world will appear to you of the same colour as the colour of the glass you put on. If you yourself become free of fault, you will not detect evil anywhere. One who is established in Brahma sees Brahma everywhere.



A son who does not look after his aged parents, a husband who does not protect his faithful and virtuous wife, a father who does not tend his young children, a pupil who does not serve his teacher and a man of resources who does not help the Brahmans or those who seek his protection, are as good as dead.

—Bhagavān Śri Kṛṣṇa.



ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावश्यते ॥



KRISHNA KALPATARU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(Bhagavadgītā VI. 30)

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वन्दे शारदपूर्णचन्द्रवदनं वन्दे कृपाम्मोनिधिं
वन्दे शम्भुपिनाकखण्डनकरं वन्दे स्वभक्तप्रियम् ।
वन्दे लक्ष्मणसंयुतं रघुवरं भूषालचूडामणिं
वन्दे ब्रह्मपरात्परं गुणमयं श्रेयस्करं शाश्वतम् ॥

(Rāmagītagovinda)

"Obeisance to the chief of Raghus, the Eternal Puruṣa accompanied by Śrī Lakṣmaṇa, whose lotus-like face is similar to the autumnal full moon, who is an ocean of compassion, who broke Śiva's bow into two, who is the beloved of devotees, the crown-jewel of kings, the very embodiment of Supreme Brahma, greater than the greatest, full of three Guṇas, the bestower of auspiciousness."

Supreme Peace Through Knowledge of God

(Continued from the previous number)

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

Q. What do the words 'Yajña' (sacrifice) and 'Tapas' (austerity) convey? How does the Lord enjoy the fruit of both? And how does man attain peace by knowing Him to be the enjoyer of both?

A. Practice of virtues (known as Yamas and Niyamas, such as harmlessness, veracity, etc.; service and adoration of gods, the Brahmans, and elders such as the father and mother; serving the humble and poor, afflicted and oppressed with regard and love and suitable measures adopted for relieving their distress; and all virtuous acts such as the performance of sacrifices and the practice of charity, etc.—all these should be taken as included under 'Yajña' and 'Tapas'. The Lord is the soul of all (*Gītā* X. 20); therefore, it is He who accepts the service and adoration of all, appearing in the form of gods, the Brahmans, the poor and the afflicted. In reality, therefore, it is He who enjoys the fruit of all sacrifices and austerities (*Gītā* IX. 24). It is due to their ignorance of divine essence and glory of the Lord that people serve and adore gods and men and regard them as enjoyers of the fruit of service and sacrifices, etc.; that is why they are rewarded with a fruit which is finite and perishable in character (*Gītā* VII. 23), and are unable to attain real peace. He, however, who has realized the divine essence and glory of the Lord has his eyes directed towards

Him, who informs all as their very soul. Thus recognizing every living being as a manifestation of the Lord, he feels, while serving the gods and the Brahmans, the poor and the afflicted, that he is serving the all-pervading Divine, the highest object of his adoration and love, in all those forms. One finds excessive joy and unique satisfaction in serving him who is held in some esteem by him, for whom he has the least reverence or devotion, or for whom he has any amount of true and sincere love. Does a devoted son ever feel wearied in serving his father, an affectionate mother in fostering her child, and a loving wife in attending on her husband? Does a true disciple or follower ever shirk on any account the service of his revered preceptor or guide? One feels ever-increasing zeal in serving the object of one's esteem, admiration or love; any amount of service that he is able to render to the latter will appear inadequate to him. He will never feel that he is obliging the man or woman he is serving. Far from priding himself on this service he deems it a privilege conferred on him; and the greater the amount of service he is able to render the more unassuming and unpretentious he becomes. Instead of expecting an acknowledgement for the services rendered by him, he would feel apprehensive every moment lest he might be deprived of the privilege he was enjoying. He

undertakes such service because he derives unique satisfaction therefrom. But such satisfaction does not deter him from the service, since his mind is constantly brimming with joy; and instead of feeling satiated with this joy he would be inclined to render more and more service. When the service rendered to one who is an object of worldly esteem, admiration and love is so sincere, so whole-hearted and so gratifying, who can tell how much and what transcendent joy, how much and what unique and divine satisfaction will a devotee enjoy,—a devotee who recognizes in every form his most beloved and omnipotent Lord, the object of highest adoration for the world, the Supreme Deity, the eternal abode of the highest esteem and inconceivable glory,—when he worships Him steeping his pure instinct of service in the sacred and nectarean stream of genuine and sincere faith and intense love constantly flowing towards Him! They alone can realize it, on whom this privilege is conferred by divine grace.

Q. What do you mean by recognizing the Lord as the Supreme Ruler of all the worlds, and how does one who recognizes this fact attain peace?

A. The Lord is the Master and supreme ruler of all the guardians of the world such as Indra (the god of rain), Varuṇa (the custodian of water), Kubera (the god of riches), Yama (the god of death), etc., as well as of the several Cosmic Rulers presiding over the different universes, viz., Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva. That is why the Śruti calls Him the supreme Overlord of all the Cosmic

Rulers.* Through His indescribable potency of Māya the Lord sportfully evolves, sustains and dissolves the countless millions of universes and duly controls them all and yet transcends them. To recognize the Lord as the omnipotent controller and supervisor of all and the Ruler of all cosmic rulers is to recognize Him as the supreme Ruler of all the worlds. A devotee with this cognition, being cognizant of the surpassing glory and mystery of the Lord cannot forget Him even for a moment. Freed from all anxiety and fear he keeps himself exclusively engaged in His thoughts. Internal foes such as lust and anger, which disturb one's peace of mind, do not even approach him. There is no one greater than the Lord in his eyes. He, therefore, devotes himself to His remembrance and is always and incessantly merged in contemplation of the Lord, the unfathomable and infinite ocean of supreme peace and bliss.

Q. How is the Lord the friend of all creatures and how does one who knows Him as such attain peace?

A. There is nothing whatsoever in the entire universe which is not possessed by the Lord and in respect of which He may have the least selfish concern with anyone. He has all His desires fulfilled in every way (*Gītā* III. 22). Nevertheless, being all-compassionate, He naturally showers His grace on all and caters for the good of all; nay, descending time and again He performs multifarious deeds of a wonderful nature, singing which alone people cross the ocean of mundane existence. Every

* *Vide Svetasvatara Upanisad* VI. 7.

single act of His is full of beneficence to the world. He blesses even those who are slain or punished by Him; no dispensation of His is devoid of mercy and love. In this way the Lord is the friend of all creatures. People do not realize this secret; it is therefore that they feel happy or grieve over incidents which are welcome or otherwise in the worldly sense, and are unable to attain peace. He who realizes and comes to believe that the Lord is his disinterested friend and that whatever He does He does for his good, takes every occurrence to be an auspicious dispensation of the all-merciful Lord, full of love and compassion, and remains cheerful under all circumstances. He, therefore, is able to attain lasting peace. There is no longer any cause for his tranquillity being disturbed in any way. Even in this world if a ruler or an officer of high rank and authority cultivates friendly relations with an ordinary man and if the latter comes to know that the ruler or officer in question is his genuine well-wisher and is prepared to extend his help and protection to him,—even though such rulers and officers are not altogether unselfish, and are neither omnipotent nor supreme in authority,—the man who is thus befriended considers himself very fortunate and freed from all anxiety and fear is transported with joy. What transcendent joy and unique satisfaction will be ours, if God Himself, who is all-powerful and all-seeing, the witness and inner controller of all, the supreme Ruler of all the worlds, an infinite ocean of countless inconceivable virtues and an embodiment of supreme love, proclaims Himself to be our friend and if we repose faith in His words and recognize Him as such, is difficult for us to guess !

Q. Is it he alone who knows the Lord to be endowed with all the three attributes, viz., as the enjoyer of the fruit of all sacrifices and austerities, as the supreme Lord of all the worlds, and as the friend of all living beings, that attains peace, or even he who recognizes Him to be endowed with any of the above three attributes ?

A. To say nothing of those who recognize the Lord to be endowed with all the three attributes, even he who recognizes Him to be endowed with any of the three attributes attains peace. For he who fully realizes the significance of any of these attributes cannot help remembering Him with single-minded devotion. As a result of God-remembrance the Divine Grace begins to shower on him and through that grace he speedily realizes the truth, essence, glory and virtues of the Lord and attains perfect peace. Ah ! how much joy and what satisfaction one will derive when he will realize that the Lord Himself, who is adored by all gods and great sages, who is the sole enjoyer of the fruit of all sacrifices and austerities, and is the supreme Lord of all universes and their lords, is his dearest friend ! He will find no comparison between himself, the meanest and most insignificant creature, and the Lord, who is the supreme Ruler, eternally shining in His infinite and inconceivable glory, and would regard himself to be the most fortunate creature on earth. And with what unique gratitude, with what an outburst of divine feeling and with what an overflow of joy he would consign himself for ever to the sacred feet of the Lord !

Q. What is the means of realizing that the Lord is the enjoyer of the fruit

of all sacrifices and austerities, the supreme Lord of all the three worlds and the greatest friend of all creatures? Through what discipline can one realize the truth, essence, glory and virtues of the Lord and develop exclusive devotion to Him?

A. By associating with exalted souls with reverence and love, hearing and contemplating on the meaning of the sacred scriptures and by surrendering oneself to the Lord and praying to Him with a longing heart one can through His grace realize His glory and virtues and develop exclusive devotion to him.

Q. To which aspect of His does the Lord refer by the word 'मात्' (Me) in the verse quoted above ?

A. The word 'मात्' in the above verse refers to the integral Divine, who is both qualified and unqualified, both manifest and unmanifest, with form and without form; who is all-formed, all-powerful and all-pervading; the supreme Reality, the Oversoul, the substratum of all and the supreme Ruler of all the worlds; who though unborn, imperishable and the supreme Lord of all beings descends on this earth from time to time through His Yogamāyā with a view to carrying on His pastimes by taking hold of His Prakṛti, and who manifesting Himself as Śri Kṛṣṇa delivered his divine discourse to Arjuna.

The qualifying phrase 'भोक्तरं यज्ञतपसाम्' (the enjoyer of the fruit of sacrifices and austerities), signifying as it does the fact of God being the Universal Soul, refers to His all-pervading, omniscient and all-controlling aspect. The epithet 'सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम्' (the supreme Ruler of all

the worlds) signifies the fact of God being the universal Lord and refers to His omnipotence, suzerainty and infinite glory; and the last attribute 'सुदृढं सर्वभूतानाम्' (the friend of all creatures) signifying the fact of God being the supreme and disinterested well-wisher of all creatures, refers to His excellent virtues such as unbounded and infinite mercy, love, etc.

Surrendering oneself to such an all-merciful Lord, one should pray to Him for a right knowledge of His virtues, glory and mystery as well as for His realization as below:—

"Lord! You are an ocean of mercy, and the Ruler and inner controller of all, omnipotent as well as omniscient; the entire universe can be redeemed in a moment through an iota of your grace, to say nothing of insignificant creatures like ourselves. We, therefore, offer our prostrations to You and humbly pray that You may be pleased to cast a merciful look at us, so that we may know You in reality. Although Your unbounded mercy extends on all, yet being ignorant of its secret we remain deprived of the same. Be pleased, therefore, to vouchsafe to us a knowledge of its mystery. Had you been an ocean of mercy alone and had no access to the innermost recesses of our heart, You would not have been able to realize our internal agony; but being the inner controller enshrined in the hearts of all, You are also aware of the wretched condition to which we have been reduced. And had You not been the universal Lord and all-powerful too, besides being an ocean of mercy and all-witnessing, we would not have troubled You with a prayer for our salvation. But since You are the supreme Ruler of all

the worlds and all-powerful, it is something most ordinary for You to redeem insignificant creatures like ourselves from the ocean of mundane existence.

"Our only prayer to You is that we may have exclusive attachment to You and our mind may remain engrossed in constant remembrance of You, and that we may never be separated from You. You are so benevolent by nature that You not only save your devotees but redeem even the fallen and the ignorant. Your epithets such as 'sanctifier of the

fallen' (पतिपावन) and 'saviour of sinners' (पातकितारण), etc. are too well-known; therefore it is Your paramount duty to redeem ignorant and fallen souls like us, devoid of knowledge, devotion and right conduct."

By praying to the Lord in the above strain in solitude and in any language whatsoever, with a sincere heart and in a piteous voice choked with emotion, one can realize God along with His virtues, glory and essence through His grace and attain supreme and lasting peace.

(*Kalyan*)

Complete Truth in Hinduism

BY BASANTA KUMAR CHATTERJEE, M. A.

All religions have in a way admitted the truth of the Law of Karma that if a person commits an act, good or bad, he must reap its fruit either in the same life or in a subsequent life. But it is only in Hinduism that the operation of the Law has been worked out fully and scientifically. Other religions have failed to realize the truth of the complementary proposition that some of the pleasures and pains which we enjoy in this life are due to acts, good or bad, which we committed in our previous life. Some babies suffer from illness from their very birth. They could not have committed in this life any sin for which they suffered. Other religions cannot explain the cause of this suffering. If God is just and almighty, there must be proper cause for the suffering of every being. Hinduism alone explains that the sufferings of such babies are the result of sins committed in their previous birth. Mrs. Annie Besant gave birth to a

daughter who suffered from birth and died after a brief life full of suffering. She pondered over the question—why did the baby suffer so much? She asked many clergymen. She read books explaining different religions. Not till she read books on Hinduism did she arrive at a satisfactory solution. There are other considerations from which we have to conclude that there must have been a previous birth. Poet Kālidāsa in his inimitable masterpiece, the *Śakuntala*, said that persons even in the midst of their dear ones seem to long for some absent friends and that it must be due to memories of their dear ones of previous births.

रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मयुरांश्च निश्चन्य शङ्खान्
पर्युत्सुकीभवति यत् सुखितोऽपि जन्तुः ।
तच्छेतसा सरति नूनमवोषधपूर्वं
भावस्थिराणि जननान्तरसौहृदानि ॥

Who teaches a baby just born how to suck its mother's milk? It must have

sucked in previous lives and the habit has persisted in this birth. There is another consideration in support of the existence of a previous life. All religions agree that the soul is immortal, i. e., has no end. But if an object has a beginning, it must also have an end. Only if it has no beginning can it have no end. Hence the soul must be without beginning. No other religion can say in what state the soul existed before its birth. Hinduism alone gives a full account.

All religions agree that there is a heaven and a hell after this life. But whereas other religions say—or seem to say—that the heaven and the hell are everlasting—Hinduism asserts that a soul cannot remain in heaven or hell for ever. For residence in heaven or hell is the result of finite acts committed by us. And the result of finite acts cannot be infinite. Residence in heaven or hell, however long, must have its end. According to Hinduism after residing in heaven or hell (may be for thousands of years) the soul is born again on this planet. Then, again, it cannot be said that after death all souls must go to heaven or hell. Those who perform pious acts go to heaven. Those who commit sins go to hell. There may be souls who neither performed pious acts nor committed sins. According to Hinduism they do not go to heaven or hell but are immediately born again.

The state of emancipation (Mokṣa) is also a unique conception of Hinduism not to be found in other religions. Unlike heaven or hell (which are of limited duration) emancipation is unending or everlasting. Unlike heaven or hell, emancipation is not the result of any

acts performed. If it had been created by any acts, it would have to be finite. Emancipation is the result of true knowledge. The soul realizes its own nature. It realizes that it is different from the body. It realizes that it is pure knowledge or consciousness. The forces of nature can destroy all material objects, but they cannot destroy pure knowledge or consciousness. Hence once the soul realizes its own nature of pure knowledge or consciousness, that state of the soul (the state of emancipation) can never be terminated even though the body perishes. As stated before, emancipation is not created by any acts. But acts help to remove the veil of ignorance which prevents the soul from realizing its own nature. This doctrine of everlasting emancipation depending on true knowledge is unique in Hinduism and clearly defines the highest goal of human life.

All religions have got some sort of theory of creation. They all admit that there was a time when the universe did not exist, viz., the time of Pralaya. Other religions seem to indicate that Pralaya was without beginning. But Hinduism asserts that there was a creation before the Pralaya, there was another Pralaya before that creation, and so on without beginning. Sṛṣṭi-Sthiti-Pralaya, Sṛṣṭi-Sthiti-Pralaya, the cycle of creation and destruction has been going on without beginning. The well-known Mantra:-

सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ धाता यथापूर्वमकल्पयत् ।
दिवे च पृथिवी च नृरिक्षमधो स्तः ॥

—which is to be uttered at the time of Sandhyāvandana indicates that there was a creation before every creation. The inequalities which exist at the beginning of every creation are due to

the different kinds of action in the previous creation. At the time of every creation some Jivas are created as men, some are created as beasts. It cannot be explained in any other way than the theory that these Jivas performed different acts in the previous birth.

Hinduism alone says that plants and animals also have souls even as men have. For, what is a soul? It is pure consciousness. And plants and animals have consciousness even as men have. As Śankara said, if you run towards an animal with a stick in the hand the animal will run away. The animal must have argued that if the stick falls on the body it will cause pain. On the other hand when an animal is invited with offerings of grass it approaches, because it thinks that eating of the grass will give it satisfaction. As the *Devimāhātmyam* says:—

शनिनो मनुजाः सत्यं किञ्च ते न हि केवलम्।
यतो हि शनिनः सर्वे पञ्चपश्यसृगादयः॥

"It is true that men have knowledge. But they alone do not possess knowledge. The birds, beasts, etc., all possess knowledge."

It may be thought that beasts cannot distinguish between the good and the bad and that man can distinguish it and that it should, therefore, be concluded that beasts have no soul. But the distinction between the good and the bad is made by the intellect (or the Buddhi); in man the intellect is more highly developed than in the animal. The nature of the soul is pure consciousness and that is the same in the man as in the animal. Children and lunatics

cannot distinguish between the good and the bad. It cannot be said that they have no soul. Some confirmed criminals also cannot distinguish between the good and the bad. We should, therefore, conclude that animals have soul as well as men and that the distinction between men and animals lies in the difference in the nature of their intellect.

All religions say that God created the universe. We know that for the creation of an object two things are necessary—a living creator and the material out of which the thing is created. The former is called the Nimitta Kāraṇa and the latter is called the Upādāna Kāraṇa. All religions agree that God is the Nimitta Kāraṇa of the universe. But what is the Upādāna Kāraṇa, the stuff out of which the universe is created? Other religions cannot reply. They seem to imply that the universe was created out of nothing. But nothing can be created out of nothing. Hinduism alone has got the reply. The universe was created out of God Himself. God did not require any external object for the creation of the universe. Just as the spider creates the web out of its own body, so God created the universe out of Himself. And then Hinduism explains the process of creation in detail. At first sky, then out of sky, air, then out of air, fire, then out of fire, water and finally out of water, earth.

It will appear from the instances given above that complete truth is to be found in Hinduism, and that in other religions only fragments of the complete truth can be found.

Five Specifics for Self-Purification—V.

Second Series

(Continued from the previous number)

RIGHT CONDUCT FOR WOMEN

The directions given above in respect of health, bathing and food, etc. should be followed as well by women as by men. They should remember God every morning and offer worship to the Deity. Offering of water to the Sun after bath is also enjoined upon them. They should pay their respects to the elder women of their house. A woman who has her husband by her side should likewise bow to him.

A woman should scrupulously avoid the following practices:—

- (1) Speaking in a loud voice;
- (2) Laughing loudly;
- (3) Talking with a stranger;
- (4) Gossip with other men;
- (5) Speaking loudly while passing through a street;
- (6) Needlessly entering an assemblage of men;
- (7) Attending cinema shows and theatrical performances, etc.;
- (8) Bathing in open;
- (9) Making an invidious distinction between one's own kith and kin and others in the matter of food; withholding delicious articles of food from the children of other members of the same family;

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

- (10) Differential treatment of male and female children;
- (11) To put on clothes or decorate oneself at a place exposed to the gaze of others;
- (12) To meet a man other than one's own husband in seclusion; to remain even with one's own father or brother in seclusion unnecessarily; jesting with men;
- (13) Singing filthy songs;
- (14) Frequenting others' houses without any purpose;
- (15) Answering calls of nature in a place frequented by men;
- (16) Exposing one's limbs to the gaze of servants and talking or jesting with them freely;
- (17) To call in hawkers to one's house and purchase things from them;
- (18) To put on garments of an extremely thin texture so as to expose one's limbs to the gaze of others;
- (19) To touch the person of any man (even with faith and reverence); to touch the feet of a man other than one's husband;
- (20) To conceal or steal a thing from the husband;

- (21) To fail in one's duty to a guest;
- (22) Shirking work involving physical exertion, such as grinding and pounding, etc.;
- (23) Excessive fondness for jewels and finery and keeping one's mind wholly engrossed in providing oneself with them;
- (24) Talking unreservedly to a stranger;
- (25) Attending men's gathering and addressing them.

Women should always remain cheerful and efficiently do all domestic work, keep household articles neat and tidy and regulate household expenditure.

A virtuous and devoted wife should never undertake any religious vow or observance without the sanction of her husband.

Humility, service, modesty, forbearance, love and efficiency are among the characteristic virtues of women. They should constantly endeavour to develop them.

A widow should always keep her mind tranquil and observe chastity to the last moment of her life. Lord Manu says that a widow, though without a son, attains spiritual freedom by observing Brahmacharya; while she who takes recourse to adultery in order to beget a son goes to hell.

Not to think of a man other than one's husband is restraint of the mind; not to extol the virtues of a man other than one's husband is restraint of speech and not to touch the person of a man

other than one's husband is bodily restraint. The woman who scrupulously follows this threefold path of virtue attains to the Divine abode of the Lord.

RIGHT CONDUCT FOR CHILDREN

Children (both male and female) should get up before sunrise every morning. The first thing they should do on rising from their bed is to remember God. Then after washing their eyes and rinsing their mouth they should memorize their lessons.

The room in which children are to sit for their study should be quiet and decent-looking and should have sufficient light and ventilation. The morning is the best time for their study. Belabouring and terrifying children and telling them stories of ghosts and spirits should be scrupulously avoided. Parents should always practise restraint of mind, speech and body in the presence of children.

Children should, after getting up from the bed in the morning, make obeisance to their parents and other elders. After bathing themselves they should take their breakfast, and should have their meals at the proper time. They should obey their parents and the teacher. They should not quarrel with anybody nor steal anything belonging to others. They should cultivate love with all. They should not read a book lying down with the lantern headward.

Everyday they should take physical exercise and play. Let them serve others with their own things, but let them not take anything belonging to others without asking them and without any purpose. Let them share whatever

they eat with other children. Let them not be fond of finery and ornaments.

RIGHT CONDUCT FOR A VĀNAPRASTHA

A Vānaprastha (one who has renounced his hearth and home in order to lead the life of an ascetic in a forest) has to live in a forest. It is obligatory on him to bathe and perform his Sandhyā thrice everyday. He is not allowed to shave. He should sleep on a mattress of straw and perform the five great sacrifices daily. He is allowed to take only fruits and beets as nourishment. He should be kind to all creatures. He should devote himself wholly and solely to God Nārāyaṇa and study the Vedas. He is forbidden to eat at night. Renouncing sexual intercourse, sleep, sloth, reviling others and living, he should constantly meditate on God. He should undertake Chāndrāyaṇa and other vows, endure heat and cold and maintain the sacrificial fire. And when he develops a natural dispassion for all things of the world, he may enter the order of Sannyāsa.

RIGHT CONDUCT FOR A SANNYĀSĪ

The Sannyāsī or recluse (one who has renounced the world and leads a life of complete detachment) must have his mind and the senses perfectly under control. He must be free from all passions. He should remain either naked or have a narrow strip of cloth to cover his privities with. He should have his head cleanly shaved. He should be alike to friend and foe, and indifferent to honour and ignominy. He should not stay in a village for more than twenty-four hours and the period of his sojourn in a town must not exceed three days.

He should live on alms from day to day. He should visit the residence of a householder after the disappearance of the smoke rising from the kitchen-fire, and live for the day on what he gets from him. A Sannyāsī should always remain established in Brahma, with his senses and mind under perfect control. He should repeat at all times the mystic formula 'OM' and regard the self as identical with Nārāyaṇa, fearless and free from all notions of duality, mineness and jealousy, perfectly calm and peaceful, transcending Māyā, indestructible and integral, of the very nature of Sat-Chit-Ānanda (Existence, Knowledge and Bliss), eternal, pure and supremely effulgent. Brahma is changeless and has neither beginning nor end; it is beyond the triple modes of Nature and comprehends all. A Sannyāsī following the discipline outlined above and free from all blemishes and given up to meditation attains to the eternal transcendent Brahma.

What is most essential for a man of right conduct is that he should curb all his lower passions and mental impurities such as anger, lust, etc., and devote his mind to God. Lord Manu, therefore, says that mere observance of positive rules of conduct will not do. Restraints have also to be practised and they are as follows:—

* (1) Compassion to all living beings, (2) forgiving even those who have been positively harmful, (3) adherence to truth, (4) not to hurt any living being in any manner, (5) perfect con-

* आनुष्ठानं क्षमा सत्यमाइसा दममस्तु ।
ध्यानं प्रसादो माधुर्यमार्जवं च यमा दश ॥

trol of the senses, (6) having no desire for any object, perfect desirelessness, (7) absorption in meditation on the Divine, (8) cheerfulness of the Sattvic nature, (9) amiability and (10) straightforwardness.

Thus those who would be following the right way of life, should always be keen on observing the restraints mentioned above. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* has the following on the subject:

*“The man of learning and culture who leads a virtuous life and has acquired wisdom, who never commits

a sinful act even against the sinful and speaks sweet words even to a man with a cruel heart and is friendly and compassionate to all, has the emancipation of his soul guaranteed. It is the magnetic influence of men who are free from all passions and are never swayed by anger, lust or greed, and are established in the right way of life, that holds this world together. A wise man should, therefore, always practise in thought, word and deed what is conducive to the good of all creatures here as well as hereafter.”

(To be continued)

The Light Increase

BY REV. ARTHUR E. MASSEY

Within every soul there is an interior illumination, which will distinctly reveal the Divine element if only it is looked for and cultivated. It is the Light increase, unexpressed, inexpressible, “the Light that never was on sea or land”; that deep interior Light “which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” The Vedantist saw this when he said, “When He shines everything shines after Him, by His Light all things are lighted.” “He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness”, says the Prophet Micah. It is found by the faithful seeker, by him who desires to see by it: not by those who are indifferent to its revelation. It will reveal to him the Path that leads to the Place of Peace,

of rest, of triumph, peace in repose from the worldly battle, of triumph in rising above earthly storms and tempests in an atmosphere of unutterable calm, undisturbed by the mutations of time, or the changing condition of man. It will show him the summits of those shining pinnacles rising from the earth from elevation to elevation until their glittering summits mingle with the celestial lights, so that one knows no longer if the earthly be raised to heaven, or if the heavenly region be brought within the cognizance of men, in order that they may know that their most ravishing dreams of spiritual life are true and veritable symbols—echoes and shadows, as it were, of the splendour of that

* सदाचाररतः प्राञ्छो विद्याविनयशिक्षितः । पापेऽन्वयापः पुरुषेऽप्यमिषते प्रियाणि वः ॥
मैत्रीद्वान्तःकरणस्तथ मुक्तिः करे खिता । ये कामकोषलोभानां वीतरागा न गोचरे ॥
सदाचारस्थितस्तेषामनुभवैर्धृता मही । प्राणिनामुपकाराय यदेवेह परत्र च ॥
..... । कर्मणा मनसा वाचा तदेव मतिमान् भजेव ॥

glorious primal Divine Life which we call God, on and out of which all being and form is constructed.

The earnest and faithful spiritual aspirant will seek no external evidence for the truth and reality of the higher life which fills his soul. He will not depend upon the outward testimony, which may be impugned for the most secure foundation of his soul's strength and the building up of his spiritual nature. There is a voice within him which speaks louder than the trumpets of Sinai, with a more imperative utterance than any external evidence can furnish—a voice which makes itself heard above the roarings of the worldly market-place. There is a mystic faculty of perception in the soul, obscure, hidden away from the learning of the academies, far from the tortuous ploddings of scholastic systems, which is only developed fully, as every other faculty is developed, by a frank acceptance, strenuous cultivation, and careful nurture. It is the highest heritage of our nature, the ultimate faculty, and is evoked and awakened by many Catholics at Holy Mass. It will not be gainsaid or ignored. It is irresistible, conclusive. It requires no confirmation and admits of no denial. It is direct and immediate in its operation, and, faithfully regarded, infallible in its conclusion—*infallible as far as we are concerned*; for if it does not give the final word, it is the last we can arrive at. The innermost voice in all of us, if we can but hear it, is the voice of God.

It is true this voice demands a very careful hearing. It is but a whisper at first; a "still small voice"; but it grows in distinctness the more it is listened to. When something appeals to us as true,

judged by that inward instinct of recognition which rises up definitely in the innermost of our being, we should not let any intellectual cavillings prevent us from accepting and appropriating it at once. When a fact, circumstance, or aspect has established itself before us as veritably so, we should not reject it because we cannot reconcile it with other truths which appear to be adverse to its acceptance: light does not cease to exist because darkness exists also—but rather we should attribute the incongruity to the conditioned state of our own limited powers, in not seeing the whole in its full extension on the plane of the Infinite in which the straight line becomes a circle and all that we call contradictions, wedded to each other, are united and assimilated in the bond of truth. Many of the most precious jewels of life are lost to us by timidity of appropriation, by our neglect of those diviner instincts of the soul which would lead us to the right and true if we would but obey them. If by mischance an erroneous conclusion should thus be presented to us, if we are sincere and earnest, it will soon fall spontaneously from us. We need fear no permanent injury. We should certainly go the shortest way to truth, not pausing on first principles when the Kingdom lies before us; not allowing the obvious and perceptible to wait on the formulas of logic and reasoning, but with confidence in the abiding faculties of our nature, we should take up truths as flowers are gathered in gardens, because of their beauty and desirability; not made more desirable or beautiful from a knowledge of their scientific names or of their exact place in the vegetable kingdom.

The process of spiritual unfoldment must continue uninterruptedly until the Light Increase suffuses and dominates our whole being, until we are able to say "Not I but Christ that liveth in me." We shall have then realized that we are not the physical body, but that which uses it, that we are not our emotions, but that which controls them, that we are not our mental images, but that which creates

them. "God is Light", we must turn inwards to appropriate that light that we may be free in His service "Whose service is perfect freedom".

Religious Education*

By JAYENDRARAY BHAGWANLAL DURKAL, M. A.

The secular basis of Indian and especially University education has been definitely harmful to the rulers and the ruled, the principles of secularism,—which is avowedly a kind of free thought (*vide* Holyoke's Principles of Secularism)—being highly damaging to all religious belief, without which "morality stands on sand." The western educational system, even in Europe, has been instrumental in accelerating the forces of disruption, disorder, disunion and defiance. The prevailing system of Indian University education has been found highly unsatisfactory in its tendencies on the various nationalities in India, partly by denationalizing them and partly by multiplying the type of what Lord Curzon aptly satirized as the anglicized Indian. It has introduced tendencies towards irreligion, money-greed and materialism, which are potent forces for national deterioration; it has introduced scepticism in the realms of the intellect, libertinism

in that of morals, and opportunism in that of economics. It has created ambitions, political, social, and economical—individual as well as national—which legitimately culminate, as European history shows, in the catastrophe of Bolshevism. It has indirectly promoted discontent amongst the people against the Government by its tendency to undo the people's great civilization and heritages and to waylay the nation's intellect into the quagmire of disbelief, despondency, and vagaries of the ballot-box. It has promoted the desire and leanings towards democracy, which is highly unsuited to the Indian conditions. People have 'been westernized into headlong obedience to strange doctrines'.

Religion, which is ingrained in the Asiatic character and is the very life-blood of the Indian people, ought to be the integral part of education. Materialism and its allied doctrines are on their trial in Europe; the experiment has so

* Taken from the author's book 'Conservative India' (which can be had from Messrs. D. B. Taraporewalla Sons and Co. for Rs. 3/8/- or 5 shillings).

far resulted in keener struggle for existence, larger national indebtedness, greater amount of discontent and crime, and more devastating wars and revolutions. The introduction of western culture of such a type has been an error in India and deserves to be remedied as early as possible for the peace of the country. Lord Macaulay's view has fructified with a vengeance. The higher education in India should conform to the accredited beliefs, ideals, usages and traditions of the Indian people. It should be not revolutionary but resuscitative, not Western but Indian.

It may be said that religion is the cause of dissension and strife. In fact, it is not so. Men fight for whatever intimately touches them—religion, power, wealth, honour, as the case may be; the ostensible occasions are changed to suit the fighting propensities in human nature. But the strifes of religion, though insistently magnified, have taken but a much smaller toll of human life than claimed by the forces that have been let loose after religion was dethroned. It may be objected that the different religions in India are turbulent enough even now and may become more turbulent without the leveling tendencies. It is not likely to be so. The people were more religious half a century ago and were less quarrelsome. Religious knowledge would further its translation into actual life. At present religion has slipped off and religious pride has remained; hence the troubles and brawls have multiplied. The principle of self-control is shelved and that of self-assertion dominates. Some people would not like to see these antiquated things

revived. Yes, those who are trained under the present secular system are likely to do so. But the people in general still have an intimate regard for religion. The Hindu wishes to remain a good Hindu and the Mahomedan a good Mahomedan. These different nationalities or communities, if you like, do not wish to be rubbed out into a new alloy. They aspire to an ideal of federated nations. All religions are united in their general import. It is sometimes said that religion is a stumbling-block in progress, and may be allowed to gradually disappear. I do not think so. Religion is the backbone of human character and the effective fountain-head of the great virtues and noblest traits that adorn humanity. Without religion man would soon deteriorate into a beast. It may be argued that religion is a matter of the individual's personal interest, not of public exhibition. The reply is that religious instruction is the function of education, though the translation of that instruction into practice is the individual's personal concern. Education is a force and religious instruction would determine the character of that force. It may be said by some that we do not want the peaceful, freezing teachings of religion; nowadays, we want fighters. I would ask, is it not desirable that we may have better fighters in a better cause?

It may be remarked that we need give no premium to superstition in this scientific age. The reply is that science is by confirming some of the so-called superstitions with its experimental hall-marks. And who after all may be preferred, the superstitious or

the supercilious? A belief does not become a superstition by being dubbed so; after all there is not much fear of people being unbecomingly superstitious in this rationalistic age! "We may not", in the words of Augustine Birrel, "proscribe mysticism; it is the main factor of that ideal world by which all human progress is conditioned." It may be pointed out that there would be many practical difficulties in working out this principle. Indeed difficulties there are likely to be when serious departure is to be made from the trodden path; but they would not be insurmountable and need not be magnified in advance. Instruction classes in sacred texts may have to be arranged on a denominational basis. The step will not only be desirable but extremely popular. It may be said that an alien Christian Government cannot introduce religious education on the basis of *other* religions. My reply to this objection is that it is more desirable that a foreign Government should promote education on the basis of the people's ideals, traditions and usages rather than impose upon its subjects an education which is not only against the grain but has proved of doubtful utility and positive harm. While Christian influences are being disestablished in Europe, the Government need not be so touchy on Christian religion as not to admit the study of other religions in their respective followers. It may be remarked that the religious teaching will be counteracted by the other surroundings and tendencies which draw their forces from elsewhere. The remark is partly true; but our aim should

be stick to the good and counteract the evil *as far as possible under the circumstances.*

University education should therefore be Indianized in spirit by substituting the religious instead of the secular principle in education,—connoting, in effect, faith instead of scepticism, character instead of libertinism, and benevolence and sympathy instead of self-interest and self-assertion. It should be Indianized in substance by the introduction of (a) accredited Indian text-books, (b) Indian subjects of study, such as the Indian Medical Science, Theology, etc., and (c) Text-books written from Indian points of view. It should be Indianized in method by (a) the introduction of the vernaculars as the media of instruction, and (b) simplifying the surroundings of the life of the student. It should be Indianized in personnel by a great utilization of men who have been sympathetic students of Indian culture and civilization. And lastly, it should be Indianized in atmosphere by a simplicity of physical surroundings, by a closer relationship to Indian ideals, institutions and usages.

The aim of education is as infinite as human hopes, as pure as human aspirations and as vivid and as dim as Divine Providence itself. It is, in rough words, to provide for the harmonies of life, to mould the child into good man or good woman. It is its primary business to make the individual good at heart even more than efficient in wits,—which efficiency is more dangerous if it moves in the wrong direction.

Kangalini

BY WANDERER

Who is Kangalini? She is a humble mendicant maid, humility personified, yet caring not for copper or silver or a handful of rice. She is a beggar importunate. Well might she say of herself:

"Beggar as I am,
Despise me not;
Not the beggar of the street am I.
'Tis at Thy door alone,
I come and wait
Like a beggar blind,
Spreading my cloth.
'Tis Thy gifts alone I seek,
Thy wealth covet;
And for these alone
A beggar's bowl I hold,
A beggar's garb I don."

Her aspiration is to find a place at the feet of her lord and to be taken as his vassal. Painfully conscious that she is too unclean to be near him, she sets to cleansing herself. When she had made herself stainless, she got what she had sought.

Kangalini has her own story to tell, which is given below. For a clearer exposition of it, it has to be stated that her narrative is taken (through the author's courtesy) from a book, entitled "In Quest of Bliss"*, which purports to be a translation of *Kalachand-Gita*, a Bengali lyrical poem by the late Sisir Kumar Ghosh, journalist, politician and a devout Vaisnava. The book opens with a Sādhu in a forest who had left the world in quest of God. His young wife, solicitous of his comforts and safety goes into the wood with a newborn babe in her arms and seeks in vain to bring him back. But the babe, lisping 'ba-a-a', arrests his attention and makes

him open his hitherto closed eyes. Then the wife brings some milk and fruits and placing them before him, makes an obeisance and goes back home. The Sādhu is overtaken by a reverie, theorizing on the mysteries of creation, and in the end is nearly unconscious and beholds in a dream a vision of five fair maidens grouped in a charming wood. Each, to the others unknown, narrates the story of her life. Kangalini is one of them. It need hardly be added that her narrative is only one of the several ways of seeking the All-High and the All-Sweet. Could we only seek to approach Him as Kangalini? To quote the words of Sri Ramakrishna; "He finds God quickest, whose concentration and yearning are strongest. In this age of Kali, three days' earnest yearning to see God is enough for a man to obtain Divine grace."

Says Kangalini:-

The beautiful lord with endless love,
close to me he lived. His fame from far
and near I heard and longed to be his
maid.

Weak and helpless I drifted, tempest-tossed
from shore to shore, and none in
this wide world had I whom to call my
own.

Night and day I brooded, a leaden weight upon my heart, as how to serve him I could make me fit and unto my bosom hold his crimson feet and all remorse and fear for ever shed.

Proudly before the glass I stood on toilet bent. But to look into the glass was to shake with fear,—such a dreadful face it looked. So ugly, alas, I never knew I was,—my heart was almost withered! Or was it the glass had stains which made me look so loathsome?

* Published by Rai Bahadur N. Dey, Morning Side; Namkum P. O. (Dist. Ranchi).

I cleaned the glass, and again I looked, and now darker still I seemed. The more I cleaned the glass, the more it showed me up and the more in grief I sank.

Methought some pox or sores I had of which the scars were left. The sores were gone, the marks remained,—proof for ever of the sores I had had. And beneath the scars, it seemed, the sores did live and made me smart and gave no peace to my riotous heart.

Grimacing at others to give them pain, distorted my face remained. Picking holes in them and scenting their faults, my nose was flattened to my face. Thus through my own follies I fell;—whom shall I tell my woes?

An unclean body with countless sores in which maggots bred. Drawn by their putrid smell the flies did swarm; and such was I,—untouchable and sinful!

Biting my fellows, my teeth were long and protruded. Ever in anger, my eyes were red and fiery. Gluttony uncurbed, my tongue hung out and from it saliva dropped profuse. And such was the face I had and saw in the glass.

"Oh what is it I see?" cried I in grief and fear, my voice sharp as a razor's edge. "An ass's voice thou hast", my mates abused.

All pride was crushed! The beautiful lord, his home, his shelter soft, all hopes to own them lost!

Supremely beautiful was he: no match for him was I. How could he take me as his own,—me so ugly, untouchable and sinful?

If perchance I meet him, with what cheek could I tell him: "Grant unto me thy feet, O lord, and my unholy person in thy service keep?"

O how could I be fit to be his slave, to hold his lotus-feet upon my head, while his kindest words into my ears shall softly fall! O what devotion would fit me for this luck!

Thus I pondered and many a means I took to make me lovely to behold. With turmeric my body I stain and to the sun expose; a darker hue the skin doth take. Unguents many I try, but cleansing there was none. My crooked limbs by force I straightened. Back to their shapes they went, as soon as I let go of them, distorted as before. My hideous spots with my cloth I sought to hide and neighbours giggled as they remained revealed.

* * *

A lovely girl was she that chanced to pass by me, her face beautiful as the moon, her gait measured and swanlike, proud and highborn. Laden with the weight of her brimful youth, she could hardly walk, while the anklets on her feet sweetly tinkled. Her I caught and thus at her feet I prayed: "This beauty and this grace of thy person, tell me, dear, how they came or thou hadst them by what devotion."

Sweetly smiling says she:

"Why dost thou grieve thus, sister?
Dip thyself in Jamuna water,
Daily, gently, rub thou long;
And the marks on thee
Shall soon be gone.
Soon shalt thou of the fairest be,
And the lord thy lover
Shall come to thee."

* * *

High on my head the saintly words I held; and daily, as my day's toil was done, to the Jamuna I sped and dipped in its water, my body rubbed. And thus by daily rubbing, slowly it came to be clean and fair, its hue like that of molten gold.

From behind a cover he espied me. And out he came and stood upon the bank, supremely beautiful to behold. His lotus-eyes wet with tears, he looked at me and in a voice choked, thus accosted: "How much longer wilt thou remain forgetful of me, whilst I for thee am dying?" "Touch me not," implored I—"me, so unclean with these my sores." A move he

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made and beckoned. And as behind him I walked some way apart lest I, so unholy, should touch him, he of a sudden turned and with his arms round my neck clasped me unto him.

* * *

What more shall I say, sister—my memories lost, as senseless on the ground I fell. With the magic touch of his feet, my lifelong woes were gone, all gushing out through my eyes. Far and near I looked lest I be caught like this, and to my hearth and home my feet were loth to wend. Ever since, for him and his love, out of home I roam, ever in his wake, and now in quest of him in this forest deep. Many a time, O sister, my parents came to take me home, whom with weeping eyes I begged: "Where shall I go forsaking him here, at whose feet my body and soul, my life, my caste and all I've laid?"

* * *

Three names he has, "Hari", "Krṣṇa" and "Rāma", lisping which through this wood I walk and his presence in words like these I seek: "O kindest of hearts, the protector of the weak, show thyself unto this poor girl."

Nothing but his names I knew, names more precious than priceless gems, names which my every atom claimed; and by which alone I invoked him: "O Śrī Hari, O Śrī Krṣṇa; give unto me thy lotus-feet."

And indeed "Hari-bol" is all that counts. *Yag* and *Yajña*, *Tantras* and *Mantras* are all futile; the only password is "Hari-bol".

* * *

Again, his idol I build, and with water and incense sweet, and devotion deep, worship his lotus-feet. And oft to my senses lost and laved in tears, his beauteous face I see.

Mute and motionless was he,
No word his lips did part;
My homage no answer had;
It nearly broke my heart.
Then with a piteous wail I cry:

"Speak O lord, or at thy feet I die."

My suppliant prayers touched his heart,

He cast his glance on me and smiled;
My doubts were gone,

My fears were past,

And, by his mien emboldened,—

On a throne of lotuses I placed him,
And at his crimson feet I sat;

Bowing with folded hands I sing:
And the lord is pleased at last.

The five-wick'd lamp I lit,
And waved it with fervour meet
Before his face and feet.

My armlets jingled,
The bell-sounds mingled,
And the lord was visibly pleased.

A bed of flowers made,
The lord is thereon laid,
And I at his feet:

My eyes fixed on his face,
His feet on my bosom pressed,
My heart did leap and beat.

Anon the lord is on the throne
And I at his feet;

My dishevelled hair
Their dust doth kiss;—

Dust of lotus powdered sweet;
And with it I my toilet make.

Thus speaking, the maiden bowed and to the other girls she said: "Forgive me, the meanest of the mean as I am. The dust of your feet I seek in which to bathe and wash; and for my deliverance your grace is my only chance." And as though by sore contrition moved, she hung down her head and wept, her face sad as the shrouded moon. "Krṣṇa, Krṣṇa," lisps she, "vouchsafe my prayer, O lord, make me the slave of thy slaves."

Now heavenward her face she lifts and anon on the dust she rolls and in agony mourns: "Oh! Where did he fly, he who I thought in my heart did lie? He for whom through this wide wood I sped?"

"But why deceive thy *sakhis*, sweet maiden", some one whispers; "is he not

hid under your mantle, next to your heart?"

* * *

Rangini smiles and says:

Shame on thy lord who wants his praises sung, who seeks our servile bows and complaisant looks when prostrate at his feet we lie. Why, 'tis a mockery indeed, it makes us laugh and sigh.

Lord of the living and the dead,
The highest, holiest and best;
From his vassals' nods
He pleasure gets!
He must be to all senses lost.

On a throne he is placed,
A sword is in his hand;
The universe he rules,
And the meanest man bows,
With folded hands, trembling,
And all the while crying:
'How kind art thou, O lord.'

And he is mighty pleased,
While our faults he seeks,
And finding them, gives
Unrelenting blows.

If this of thy lord the picture be,
Into his mouth some fire put,
And him, at the nearest spot,
His cremation give,
And weep thou not.

I wonder how this lord of thine,
Full of fury and fire,
Thy reverence could ever inspire.

Says Kangalini:

Sweeter than his bosom are his feet,
His bosom he had given me;
His feet I sought of him,
And my lord sorrowed o'er it.

At his feet I sit and live;
To his bosom if I went,
A fall from it might give
The shock of life and grief;
There's no such fear at his feet.

In his heart doth burn a flame,
My heart hath no such claim.

His heart seeking to climb,
I was seared by its heat,
And so I've sought
His tranquil feet.

In suppliant mood I find
Soothing salve for self.

'Thou art kindness' when I say,
My languished limbs feel ecstasy,
And the world is a blissful sea.

With my mood he feels abashed,
But being kind he stops me not,
Lest me of pleasure he should rob.

With my hair I wipe his feet,
He stays me by the hand.
'This hair of mine', I ask him,
'How hath it offended thee?'

Do but wipe and feel;—
You have not wiped like me;—
Tell me then if you or I
Am happier of the two.

Does it please my friend for nothing?
Could I please him if he chose not?
It pleaseth, because of me.
I know not, dears, if he or I
Is or am the higher.

He puts me on high,
I say with a sigh
'It cannot be';
And thus a tussle
'Tween him and me.

Why a turbann'd head has he?
Weakling man and powerless
Oft doth challenge his prowess;
And lest he break his pate,
He hath a turbann'd head.

Sinners as we are,
What makes you so proud?
Gifts you have got,
But whence were they found?
Forget not, dears,
They came from the touch
Of the lotus-feet of him
You revile so much.

To his bosom all do seek to go,
If I too went there, none is left here,
To worship his feet divine.

Sri Gouranga of Nadia
Do you not know ?
The highest bliss he found
In worshipping as I do.
Drowned in it, he drank
Nectar sweet of heaven;
Forgot the past, and forsook
The *klas* of Brindaban.

Supremest he and joyful,
Whatever he does for ye
Withal no return seeking,
Is rewarded by calumny.

If the five senses had not been,
Tell me, wherewith ye had known
To taste the sweets
Of Rasas born,
Or of the Rupas' thousand forms ?

Kangalini went on:

Hear me, sisters, what came next.
Blinded by pride I charged Him thus:
"I shout for Thee, no answer comes,
It puzzles my perplexed mind;
For ever 'the Kindest' called,
Thy acts are so unkind !

While I do cry for Thee,
From Thee no response comes,
As Thou wert deaf indeed
Or blind of both Thine eyes.
Unceasing I call,
Thou dost not hear;
I cease to call,
When Thou dost appear
Forsooth Thou art fickle and queer."

Both my hands He seized and in sweet affection held; and His face on mine fixed, quoth He:—"Oft indeed you have called me. And finding me not at your behest, your heart you have rent in twain, crying and crying for me. Guilty I plead and your forgiveness seek, and promise that again it shall not be. Henceforth whenever your heart will yearn for me, at your door I shall be."

Mad with joy at the gladsome gift, I felt my sorrows gone and my lifelong wishes fulfilled. Drunk with that joy,

at His feet I fell and a thousand obeisances made. And He with a darkened visage looked at me and vanished, leaving me full of glee.

"Where art Thou, my Lord!"—cried I on a morning fine, and out from His hiding came He and stood serene. Bound-ing with joy, to Him I bowed and said: "Not that I had need of Thee, my Lord, but I called to put Thee to the test." And on the morrow I call Him again. Anon He appears and with folded hands I bow at His feet.

Thus from day to day the game goes on, as Him in slothful mood I call; and the Supremest comes and stands before me like servant, slave or guilty soul. Time rolls by and hard to have He ceased to be, and desire, once so keen, His vision to behold, lost its edge, and it seemed the same to me whether He was or was not seen.

Whatever I seek would come to me, thought I, and the sense of seeking dulled; while, ere now, on a sea of bliss I used to float as His coming in my mind I pictured.

And so with eyes closed I call Him in languid voice and true to His word He comes but fails to open my eyes.

The desire to call Him died as in my mind I thought, "the Lord would come when I sought." The desire gone, sloth had come, and I slept by night and day. But who could sleep all hours? And so with eye-lids closed on the floor I lay. Ere this He was called from day to day, but now the very wish for it had died away.

With Him to guard me and protect, fears I had none, nor grief nor tears. Thus in time it came to be that neither could I laugh nor weep, unfit for either, pleasure or pain, and to live or to die was the same to me.

Once upon a day it flashed on me that for long I had not sent for Him. So, lazily

yawning, I took His name, and behold !
He stood with folded hands, that Heavenly Frame. Surprised I asked Him :—
“Why comest Thou with suppliant hands before me, the meanest of Thy slaves,
Thou who art my saviour and my Lord ?
‘Tis not for Thee to honour me.” He bent His head and in softest accents said :—

“I come, I always come
At your call,
Ever obeying, ever hearing
When you call;
I come, I come, ever grateful
For your call,
Ever answering with folded hands
Your call;

Ever conscious of my debts to you,
Ever wishing to repay somehow.”

Thus addressed and much ashamed, with folded hands I prayed :—“Not thus my Lord, not thus ! Dying as I am, torment me not.”

* * *

He was gone. To live or to die thought I, was the same to me. Death rather I would court, as a life like this was full of woes. The supremest bliss which man could wish, my kind Lord had on me bestowed. But a life such as this I could not bear; I would ask Him to appear, and death at His feet and Nirvāna I should seek, a release from self to merge in Him. “Give me, O Lord,” cried I, “this release, this rest eternal, freed from weal and woes.” And as from the deepest recess the prayer went forth, its fervour melted a frozen heart and after many a long day my eyes found tears. Fast bolted as the flood-gates were, the torrents rushed when once they oped. “My Lord !”—I shouted and dropped on the floor, my senses dead and lost.

‘Twas long before my eyes were open. And I knew not why my heart did leap with a kind of joy. And lo ! Whom would I see but my Lord sitting at my head, with kindly eyes watching my face. Rising, I fell at His feet. “My Lord”, I implored, “forgive the lowly. In bliss Thou hadst kept me, which I failed to see; and in my fancied wisdom went I out to advise Thee. What was good and what was ill for me I knew not; and yet I chose a boon, and a boon of my seeking Thou didst give. Now I pray at Thy crimson feet that what Thou pleasest Thou mayest give.”

“So shall it be”, He said and in an instant vanished. What boon He gave me I failed to grasp and pondered long over it and guessed. At last I thought I would call Him again and ask Him what boon to me He gave.

Musing thus, I shouted for Him :—“Vouchsafe Thy presence, O Lord”. But He came not and fear seized my heart. And again and again I shouted: “Where art Thou, my Śrī Kṛṣṇa, my Śrī Rāma, my Śrī Hari ? For once let me behold Thee.” Softly I call Him, and loudly I shout for Him; in all manner of forms I invoke His presence,—by night and by day, and from the depths of a weeping heart yearning for Him.

But no more for me His vision comes, and bereft of Him the world is dark.

Now in ceaseless quest of Him, I drift through this world in grief and tears

“Here thee, maiden” a voice says, “For man’s final weal, thus He makes Himself scarce; and for ever plays a game of hide and seek.”



The Lure of the Abnormal

1. THE BACKGROUND

God is said to be present in us and in everything around us. If it is true, how does it happen that we do not perceive Him? Paradoxical as it may seem, it is just the omnipresence of God that stands in the way of our recognizing His insistent presence before us.

When the reader is intent upon reading this article and taking in its contents, will he realize even for a moment that the article cannot be read at all or even exist as an article if it is not printed in black and white on paper? When he is looking at the article, he is at the same time actually looking at the sheets of paper which contain the article. The paper underlies, permeates and forms the substratum for the contents of the article, for every word of it, for every letter of every word and for every curve or angle of every letter. It is insistently present throughout. All the same, does any reader pay any attention to the paper when he is reading this? Can he possibly read and understand and appreciate this, if his attention is attracted by the paper? When the article has his attention, the existence of the paper as the material background of the article is practically ignored. Simply because of his attention elsewhere, we cannot say that the paper does not exist. In fact, if it did not exist, there would be no article at all to read.

In this connection I am reminded of the story of two rustics who were

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discussing between themselves the relative usefulness of the sun and the moon. A third stepped in and decided that the moon was the more useful as she shone during the night when all was dark while the sun shone quite unnecessarily during the day when everything was bright. It is this Daniel's mentality that we are all having when we perceive the world and yet ignore God. *He* forgot that everything was bright during the day and that the day itself was possible only because of the sun and so dismissed the sun as an unnecessary factor. Similarly, *we* forget every moment of our lives that the world is perceived and is perceivable only because it has God as its material background which underlies, permeates and forms the substratum for the world; and so we dismiss God from the world as quite an unnecessary factor. Why do we so forget?

2. THE UNINTERESTING NORMAL

When you meet a friend, you ask him "How do you do?" He may reply "Quite well, thank you." Do you then pursue the enquiry by asking him "Why are you quite well? What is the matter?" If you choose to put such questions, he will doubt your sanity. If in answer to your first question he replies, "Thank you, but I am not quite well for the last one week," you will be quite justified in pursuing the enquiry by asking him, "why, what is the matter with you?" Wherein is the difference? Why does the answer "Quite well" not admit of any

further enquiry into the why and what of it ? And why does the answer "Not quite well" admit of such further enquiry ?

A friend who usually dresses himself in pure white comes to me dressed as usual. Can I then ask him, "You are dressed in white. What is the matter ?" Suppose he comes dressed in black, I shall certainly be justified in asking him, "Why, what is the matter ?" Wherein lies the difference ? To be dressed in white is as much a fact as the other. But why does the former not admit of the questions why and what, while the latter does ?

Suppose another friend comes to me limping with a bandage on his toe. I at once ask him, "Why, what is the matter with your toe ?" The toe is after all an insignificant part of the body and in area or volume is very small in comparison with the rest of the body. The remaining portion of the body is quite all right and yet I do not tell him, "I am very glad that the major portion of your body is quite all right." If I did offer any such remark, he would stare at me and perhaps take it as an offence. Is it reasonable ? Why should the diseased minor part of the body require such special recognition ignoring the major healthy portion ?

There may be a lot of pigs screeching themselves hoarse. Nobody takes the trouble of paying for this unique music. If a man, however, begins to squeak like a pig, he at once gathers round him the children of the village who will freely part with their pice to witness this phenomenon. Why this costly curiosity when they can have the

same music more naturally from the pigs themselves ?

A thoughtful consideration of the examples given above and innumerable similar others which may suggest themselves to the reader will show that enquiry is started and curiosity is roused *only* when there is something out of the normal. Only novelty interests us and requires an explanation. The normal is uninteresting because of its very normality and is ordinarily ignored for the very same reason. It is the unnatural and the abnormal that attracts.

The newspapers will have no subscribers or readers if they recorded only the ordinary incidents of our daily life; it is the murder and rape cases that make them interesting to some; it is the cyclone and the floods that attract others. It is more so in public life; a leader is able to interest the public only so long as he gives vent to fantastic theories or makes more fantastic promises and rivets their attention to himself by drawing on his inexhaustible store of abnormalities; the moment he becomes normal, he becomes worse than dead. It is so in every sphere of life.

Even if some stale matter is placed before the reader, it must be presented in a new garb, just as I am trying to do now, to make him take interest in it. Truth cannot possibly interest us, for it is bound to be "stale". To make itself interesting, it has very often to put on the garb of abnormality and simulate fiction. A sweet is ever a sweet; but a sugar block has no chance of finding purchasers when the same sugar is available in some attractive form, say, shaped like a peacock or the Taj Mahal.

3. THE GREAT NORMAL

Unfortunately for us, God the underlying Intelligent Principle of the Universe is the stalest of the stale things, for He is ever the same and does not admit of any novelty. He is the normal background on which all abnormality can appear for a time and disappear for ever. There is nothing new about Him; for he is older than creation and He is pure Being undifferentiated by the "new" things which come into existence at the creation. There is no interesting variety in Him to attract us; for He knows no change and remains the same for ever, even when all created beings cease to be. There is not even a hump on his back to claim our attention; for he is most uninterestingly homogeneous. The sun claims our attention by his brilliance in the sky; but God can boast of no place wherefrom He can attract us. He is quite the reverse of Euclid's point; for He has magnitude but no position. It is no surprise therefore that God by His essentially being normal is unable to stimulate the curiosity of the ordinary man, who is attracted only by the out-of-the-way and the abnormal. He is quite forgotten and nobody cares even to enquire whether He exists.

A goldsmith may make a very fine necklace from a small quantity of gold. If the gold is worth four sovereigns, he may charge five sovereigns more for the fine workmanship. A man of artistic temperament will be prepared to pay far more to call himself the owner of this trinket. To him, the value of the article is not so much in the intrinsic weight of the gold as in the exquisite art displayed in evolving a particular

form out of it. He is attracted only by that form and is prepared to pay anything for it; for the form has more value to him than the gold itself. If an equally fine necklace is made of cocoanut-shell, his admiration for the workmanship will make him pay a fabulous sum for it, even though the value of the cocoanut-shell is practically not even a single pie. Suppose that by some misfortune this aesthetic gentleman finds himself short of money and feels the necessity for taking these finely worked necklaces to the pawnbroker. What will be the attitude of the latter? He will coolly refuse to accept the cocoanut-shell necklace and will mercilessly weigh the gold necklace; for to him the form has absolutely no value; he is concerned only with the substance and does not care a jot for all the fine workmanship on which the owner set so much value.

The necklace is an artificial product and may, therefore, be broken at any moment causing pain to the owner. The underlying gold remains ever gold and undergoes not even the slightest change under any circumstance. Similarly, the form-side of things is ever temporary and evanescent while the substance is permanent and lasting. If we fix our mind on the latter, there can never be any disappointment or pain; if, on the other hand, we set out our mind on the former, disappointment is inevitable and pain is bound to follow. To ensure therefore permanent escape from disappointment and pain, we are asked to gradually minimize the values which we have been accustomed to attribute to the form-side of the world and finally realize in all its fullness the changeless

and eternal value of its Substance, which is God. The Hindu system of thought aims at such weaning of our attention from the form-side of things so that ultimately we may perceive in all its truth and majesty that Substance Divine. Everything that exists only because of God, Who is pure Being and without Whom nothing can possible be. But yet we do not perceive God just as the man of aesthetic temperament has his eyes only on the workmanship and not on the material on which it has been displayed. The Vedānta wants us to adopt the mentality of the pawnbroker, who has his eyes only on the gold material.

4. THE FORM-SIDE

A cloth is but all thread, a thread is but all cotton, cotton is but all matter, matter is but all Being, and Being is but all God. Without God, there can be no Being; without Being, there can be no matter; without matter, there can be no cotton; without cotton there can be no thread; without thread, there can be no cloth. Each of them forms the substance or the material substratum of the immediately preceding one, God being the Ultimate Substance lending existence to and sustaining all. To realize that a cloth is all thread, it is certainly not necessary to tear the cloth into threads, nor is it necessary to smash a table to realize that it is but wood. Similarly, it is not necessary at all to annihilate the form-side of the world to realize the underlying God-Substance. The forms may remain quite as they are; and the seeker of Truth will utilize and use those forms just as others do in ordinary life, but only they have no

ultimate value for him. He may enjoy them but will not be misled by them. His attitude towards them will be far different from that of others. Our being engrossed in the world-aspect prevents us from recognizing the presence of God, even though we are all the time gazing at Him. His realization of God in all the forms which make up the world makes him ignore those forms. Such is the goal of the true seeker; and the aim of the Vedānta is to help everyone of us to reach that goal in gradual stages. To perceive the ever-present God is no doubt the ambition of all religions; but it seems to me that it is only the Vedānta that explains why the omnipresent God is not perceived by us and enunciates the method by which we can effectively overcome that imperceptibility and feel and realize that omnipresence in actual life.

5. TRUE PERCEPTION

In the foregoing, I have referred particularly to the characteristic of Being (the Fountain of Life) which is inseparable from God. But that is not the only aspect of God, for He is also Intelligence (the Fountain of Light) and Bliss (the Fountain of Love). A perfect realization of God-presence is the realization of the Eternal Background of Life (Sat), Light (Chit) and Love (Ānanda) which gives substance to the multiplicity of appearances which attract us under the name of the world.

The extent of our nearness to such perfect realization can be gauged by the extent of the attraction which the world has for us, for the former is inversely proportional to the latter. Even to

enquire into the existence of God and to take an interest in such enquiry is ordinarily incompatible with the retention of interest in the world. As long as we allow ourselves to be attracted by the Abnormal Seeming, the Normal Substance can never interest us. It may be quite easy to get a testimonial from others that we are quite disinterested and are "highly evolved" souls free from all limitations of thought or duty; but the barometer of the heart of each individual never gives a wrong reading and it is impossible to manipulate it. Read it correctly and do not deceive yourself or others but try to profit by it. It will tell you where you are at present, how far you have progressed in the path to perfection and how far still is the goal. Persevere and genuine effort knows no failure. Such is the warning and such

is the message of hope which the Vedānta extends to us.

The interesting ourselves more and more in the Normal known as God has to proceed on parallel lines with the interesting ourselves less and less in the Abnormal known as the World. The Vedānta system gives the name of Viveka (Discernment) to the former and the name of Vairāgya (Non-attachment) to the latter. These two correlated processes go on side by side till they culminate in the full perception of the Normal when the Abnormal ceases to be, not by annihilation as some may fear, but by merging its identity in its basic substratum, the Normal Substance Itself. The aspirant who reaches such a state of perception is free (Mukta) for ever more.

Bhakta Purandara Das

PROLOGUE

Hearken, lovers of Śrī Viṣṇu, the life of Purandara Das, the incarnation of Nārada Muni on this earth. Behold the great Viṣṇu lying in all His Majesty on the mighty serpent that floats in the Ocean of Milk, with His Consort Mahā-lakṣmī at His feet and the great sage Nārada singing with his lyre. The Lord challenged the devotion of Nārada and asked if he would ever remember his Master, even were he to be born on earth. Sage Nārada took up the challenge and was born in the world as the famous Purandara Das.

And now the story is told.

By P. S. VARADARAJA AIYAR, B. A.

PURANDARA DAS

In that pleasant town of Vemanpur near the holy land of Pandharpur, there flourished in far-off times many a merchant prince. Purandara Das was a member of the happy fraternity. He lived in a mansion, strong and beautiful, and fitted with all the comfort and luxury which architectural skill and scientific ingenuity contrived to produce. Purandara Das was a dealer in precious stones and knew one when he saw. But he was blest with a gem brighter far—his wife, the pious and lovely Lakshmi Bai. Rich as he was, Purandara Das had a poor heart, and would sooner have

parted with his life than a copper. One fine evening Purandara Das sought escape from his business cares by listening to the melodious notes of Lakshmi Bai on the spacious terrace of his mansion.

In that selfsame moment a weary traveller, old and ill-clad, entered the town imploring the passers-by to bestow a trifle on him. He had a son to marry, and marriage cost him money. And he was as poor as he was old. A jester who heard his story directed the stranger to the mansion of Purandara Das. The stranger carried a plate full of flowers and fruits, cocoanut, betel and nuts to the mansion, hoping to receive a princely donation by announcing the wedding of his son. Purandara Das received the guest, and of course the presents too, with great cordiality and respect. But when he heard the request, the smile vanished in his countenance. He pitied the stranger for his ignorance of what it cost to get on, made allowance for his dotage and showed him the way out hinting that as it was getting dark he might be lost. The petitioner exhausted all his learning to convince the merchant of the value of charity, and the latter as emphatically tried to impress on the visitor the value of gold and its scarcity.

The next day Purandara Das left for his shop and the old man appeared before Lakshmi Bai hoping for better luck. That generous lady showed him great kindness and he learnt from her how all including herself belonged to her lord, and much as she pitied him, she was powerless to give him any help. She, however, took an enormous risk: she placed her costly nose-ring in his hand,

and bade him depart before anyone knew. Forthwith the stranger left the home and his blessing. But a nose-ring was not what he wanted. He changed his form for a goldsmith's, and offered the jewel for a price at the famous shop of Purandara Das. A jewel of such rare beauty and value could scarcely fail to strike the assistant and he carried it to the notice of his master. Fancy the surprise of his master—surprise, anger, jealousy, oh a thousand shades of emotions clouded his heart! Bidding the stranger stay, he left. Lakshmi Bai was bathing as he arrived home. He summoned his daughter Rukmini Bai and wished to have the jewel that decked the nose of his wife. The pious Lakshmi Bai prayed the Almighty. She feigned to look for it in her cupboard, hand-box, music stool and all the places likely and unlikely. And she prayed inwardly, deeply, fervently. And her lord grew impatient. The clouds were gathering on his brow; he shouted, stamped his foot. She moved about like a frightened deer. She prayed for a miracle. Such a noble lady, so sweet and sad, would not God rescue her? Purandara Das had almost buffeted her, when lo! there is something shining in the shelf. The nose-ring was found, to the amazement of Lakshmi Bai, of Rukmini, of Purandara Das. But it had a lustre of a far greater degree. And now the shopkeeper in him got the better of the husband. All her faults were forgiven. Purandara Das commanded his wife to open before him the inmost recesses of her heart. Lakshmi Bai confessed. Wisdom dawned on Purandara Das. He remembered his part, the vision of the Great Lord and His challenge and all that befell beyond

the clouds that floated before him. He was completely transformed. And that was the turning-point of their lives. The grace of Heaven shone full on them. The blessed trio renounced.

The streets of Vemanpur echoed the hymns of a devotee of Viṣṇu, his wife and daughter. Purandara Das, Lakshmi Bai and Rukmini Bai sang the glory of the Lord in all the streets of Vemanpur and returned to their lowly home laden with rice and other alms. A modest cottage, a simple garment, a coarse bed and one meal a day constituted their material needs. But they rejoiced in singing the grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As Rukmini grew in years and beauty, a Brahman accosted the mendicants, and suggested her marriage to a respectable youth. But who would care to have a beggar's daughter? The Brahman assured them help and repaired to Kishkindha. He appeared before a holy and wealthy man in Kishkindha and was received with princely respects and treated to a sumptuous dinner in his house. After dinner he broached the topic of marriage of the son of the host, a comely youth, and spoke goldenly of the beauty and character of Rukmini Bai and of her noble lineage. The youth and his father approved the match and without further ado he fixed the wedding day. To Vemanpur he sped back and carried the happy news. Purandara Das and Lakshmi Bai rejoiced but wondered how they could find the wherewithal to celebrate the wedding. The day drew near and at the Brahman's bidding the bridal group journeyed to Kishkindha. Dower and stock of all kinds followed them in cart loads as the group

arrived in Kishkindha, and everyone marvelled.

Such a grand wedding on such a large scale the town had never witnessed. Thousands were fed, rich and varied were the delicacies, and every Brahman received a dhoti and a rupee, and every woman a saree and annas four. Dance, music and other amusements filled the guests with joy. The gods and men and women blest the bridal pair.

The wedding over, the pious couple pilgrimaged to the Southern country and reached the sacred mount of Tirumalai (Tirupati). There they entered a courtesan's house, not knowing her trade, and were hospitably lodged. Purandara Das watched her go forth every night gaily attired and carrying a tambourine and wondered whither she went. So he asked her "My fair hostess, I watch thee leave every night arrayed in thy best. Wouldst thou please let me know and if thou wilt, take me, whither thou goest." "Oh noble sir", the woman replied, "To the sacred mount I go, and play the lyre, and the gracious God, all pleased with music, comes forth from His chamber and dances to my tune with bells and chains around His feet. Gladly will I take thee if thou wilt go with me." Bhakta Purandara Das marvelled at her errand, and with a thankful heart and in great fear of the Holy One accompanied his hostess. They climbed the mount, entered the temple, and reached the principal court. Behind a pillar stood Purandara, and fronting the Great One the woman sat in all her glory. She laid the lyre upon her lap, she turned the keys and strummed the strings and woke up the celestial airs.

The lizard forgot to catch the fly, the wind forgot to blow as air, and all was bright and fair. Śrī Venkaṭeṣa could scarce forbear to move from off his pedestal. He came forth running, laughed and danced and chimed the bells about his feet in sweet symphony. It was a sight for gods to see. Then He stopped and bade the woman wear the bells and chains and dance, while He Himself would play upon the tambourine. And they changed places. He played the tune, she measured her steps. But many a mistake the God did make, on purpose of course, to draw His devotee from off his hiding place. And Purandara Das swore where he stood that in that Holy place divine Music was destroyed Bhagavān Śrī Venkaṭeṣa then inquired. "Who is that? Whence he talks? And how he camethither?" And the woman trembled and begged her Lord a thousand pardons for having brought him thither. But she assured that he was a pious and pure soul. Then at the bidding of the Gracious One from out his hiding place Purandara Das came forth, and poured forth the flood of divine melody singing in unison with the lyre. And the Lord was pleased and He blest them and was gone.

And Purandara Das accompanied by his faithful spouse went back to Vemanpur and as of old sang the glory of the Lord from street to street in that holy town. Great was his pride that the grace of the Lord shone full well upon him. And in that town the people gathered and sang the hymns of Holy Hari in groups styled Bhajana parties. And as did God to provoke Purandara, mightily did they offend the

Muse of music in these sacred parties. And Purandara rebuked them for their ignorance. But scarce he knew he was offending the Lord in thus offending his devotees. The tongue that chastised the devotees of the Lord was tied under His command by a foul disease. Thus stricken in woeful plight, Purandara spent many a day and night. One night the Lord appeared in his dream, and spoke to him thus: "Wherefore didst thou offend my devotees? Knowest thou not that real devotion and not music that counts in these holy gatherings? And music is but a means to reach my feet. Go, beg their pardon and grow humble, and in my grace." Purandara woke up and in the morning reached the group of singers as they sang the customed songs in their own simple way. He wept and prayed and fell at their feet and confessed full well his wrongs. And deep humility grew in him, and the tongue now free, he sang the glory of the Lord.

And as his wisdom grew, his humility also grew, and with humility his fame increased and many became his disciples. Of all disciples and devotees that flocked to him none was more attentive than Appanna.

Purandara Das cherished the memory of his fathers and never did once neglect the annual Śrāddha. On one of these days of obligation he found he lacked ghee and sent Appanna to the nearest village where ghee was sold pure and at a small price. Now Appanna moved in a slow gait, and though he bought the ghee with all the money his Guru gave and tarried not to bargain, he was still not early for the function. As he neared a small brick structure, a fierce voice

rang forth. "Stop!" it cried, "Pay the toll and pass." But Appanna had not a pice to pay the toll-gate fee. His ghee was taken by the toll gate-keeper and he was allowed to pass as empty as he came. But the mysterious keeper of the toll-gate was visible elsewhere in the form of Appanna carrying the ghee and post-haste Purandara Das ran home and served the guests with ghee. But lo, the pitcher that held the precious ghee proved miraculous indeed. The more he took, the more it yielded like an inexhaustible well. But Appanna, where is Appanna who bought the ghee? There he comes, weak and tired, and with a crest-fallen look, after a long day's walk, alas, with a woeful tale upon his lips! The master and disciple looked at each other perfectly

bewildered. Then understood Purandara Das the grace of our Lord and sang his glory evermore.

One fine morning Purandara Das went to perform his ablutions. And the Lord chose the selfsame moment to put his patience to test. He appeared as Appanna awaiting his master's commands. The master ordered the mysterious disciple to fetch him a pot of water. With many a pretended sally the dear impostor came, and while offering the pot of water deftly upset the contents. The master grew wild, and chastised the disciple and knocked him on the head. But lo, suddenly the victim vanished. And Purandara Das saw his error and begged the pardon of the Lord. The Lord and Mahālakṣmī seated on the divine eagle rose before the devotee and blest him.

Narayaniyam

TRANSLATED BY SVT. C. N. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR

[The *Nārāyanīyam* of Meppathoor Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa of Malabar concluded about A. D. 1590 is a classical Sanskrit Kāvya. It is a summary of Śrīmad Bhāgavata covered by 1036 verses divided into 100 sections (Daśakas) of more or less 10 ślokas each, dealing with separate subjects or short episodes. The work has not had the appreciation it deserves.

The *Nārāyanīyam*, comprising in itself all the essentials of a Mahākāvya, is an epitome quite unique in character. Its magnitude, grandeur of thought and sublimity coupled with marvellous felicity and melody of diction, will extort admiration from every critical student of Sanskrit literature. Each Daśaka may be considered as treating one subject or episode. A few of these referred to in their order of Daśakas are:—

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| 1. The Kapilopākhyāna | (16) | 5. Vāmana-Charita | (31) |
| 2. Dhruvacharita | (17) | 6. Ambariṣa-Charita | (33) |
| 3. Ajāmilā's Story | (22) | 7. Rāsakṛiḍā | (69) |
| 4. Gajendra-Mokṣa | (26) | 8. Kuchela's Story | (88) |

Last but not the least, the last Daśaka (11 verses) describing Bhagavat-swarūpa stands in a position all its own like the rich imagery of Milton or Shelley or any other ancient or modern poet.

Our learned friend, Syt. C. N. Krishnaswami Aiyar, has placed the English-knowing public under a deep debt of gratitude by translating the whole of this monumental work into English. We publish below the first three Daśakas from his translation, which has not yet seen the light of the day, for the benefit of the readers of the 'Kalyana-Kalpataru'.
—Editor.

First Skandha of Srimad Bhagavata

Dasaka I

THE LORD'S GREATNESS

It is the good fortune of the people that Brahma (the Supreme Being) manifests Himself in a visible form in the temple of Guruvayur. His very essence is bliss and intelligence. He is incomparable. He is not conditioned by time or space. He is ever free. Described as He is in hundreds of thousands of Nigamas (Vedic texts), His form is none the less incomprehensible. When, however, He is actually perceived, the highest aim of life (Mokṣa) becomes an accomplished fact. I—1.

When such a rare thing is within our easy reach, it is, indeed, a sad stupidity that people should worship any other thing either with their body, speech or mind. As for ourselves, let us with a firm will worship the God of the Guruvayur temple, the soul of the universe and none else in order to remove all our miseries and sufferings. I—2.

Vyāsa has repeatedly said that Thy form is made up of the elements and the senses which are born of Thy pure Sattva, which is free from the other two qualities (Rajas and Tamas). The blessed few take immense delight in Thy form, in which That (the Supreme Being), characterized as He is by Bliss and Intelligence, is reflected by reason of Its transparency. I—3.

Wise men say that Thy Sattvic qualities are the surging waves of the ocean of Brahma, which is still, which overflows with the nectar of boundless bliss, and which is lovely on account of numberless pearls of the liberated souls within. There is no reason why Thou shouldst not be (called) Niṣkala Brahma, as Thou art that Sattvic nature embodied. Ah ! all-pervading One ! the theory that Thou art Sakala (Brahma) has, however, reference only to Thy Avatars. I—4.

Oh ! Thou deathless One, although Thou dost not move, Thou, from no ostensible motive, settest up Māyā in motion by Thy mere look. It is, therefore, that Māyā, though virtually non-existent, rises up at the beginning of Kalpa (destruction of the universe). Ah ! Vaikunṭha ! Thou art restraintless because of Thy power of greatness. With the pure and all-illuminating Sattvic portion of Māyā Thou assumest various forms (Avatāras). I—5.

Oh Lord of the temple of Guruvayur, I meditate on Thy form, which is beautiful as the fresh rain cloud and the lovely Kalāya flower, which is the quintessence of beauty, which is the incarnate virtue of the eyes of the blessed, which is the abode of the free and unrestrained play of Goddess Lakṣmī and which

pours flowing nectar into the minds of devotees.

I-6.

Oh ! Thou unconquered by Māyā, I once thought that Thy work of creation was bad, because it is productive of various miseries incidental to birth and death of living beings. I no longer think so. Or else, how could living beings take delight in Thy form, which is lovely and overflowing with the nectar of knowledge and bliss, by drinking in the same with their eyes and ears. I-7.

Oh Hari, Thou dost always appear before Thy votaries, give them their desired objects unsolicited and give unto them even salvation. It will thus be seen that Thou art a Kalpaka tree which is accessible to all and which yields no end of fruit. It is in vain, therefore, that the multitude of seekers seek the trifling tree of the garden of Indra. I-8.

The other gods (Brahma and others) give, out of mercy, to the people all the boons with the exception of Mokṣa (salvation). As for Thee, Thou givest even Thine own Self. Those (Brahma and other gods) rule others (excepting themselves) with their powers derived from Thee. As for Thee, Thou art self-contained. Consequently Thy devotees take delight in Thee, sweet at every stage, because of their full-blown good luck. Hence I bow to Thee, who art the abode of incomparable virtues. I-9.

Thy prowess is such as to destroy the prowess of all. Thy unblemished glory is sung even by those who are devoid of desires. Goddess Lakṣmī is ever with Thee. Thou art omniscient. Nor art Thou attached to anything. Oh Lord of Guruvayur, O Slayer of Mura, no one else deserves the title of Bhagavān better than Thou dost. I-10.

Dasaka II

THE LORD'S FORM

I worship Thy form, which has a crown vying with the sun in splendour; which has a forehead highly resplendent with the Ūrdhwapuṇḍra (perpendicular mark in the centre of the forehead); the eyes of which bespeak kindness; which beams with smile indicative of the kindness of the heart; which has a beautiful nose; which has the Makara (fish)-like ear-rings resting on its cheeks; which has the jewel Kaustubha strung on the neck; and which shines with the Vanamālā (garland of sylvan flowers), a necklace of pearls and the Śrivatsa (a mark on the chest). II-1.

I adore Thy form, which removes all afflictions, the arms of which are adorned

with armlets, bracelets, bangles and rings set with precious stones, and bear the mace, the conch, the discus and the lotus flower. Thy waist wears a yellow garment shining with a gold band. Thy feet are as lovely as fresh lotus. II-2.

In the world whose eagerness will not be on the increase at the sight of Thy form, which is greater than the greatest in all the three worlds, more charming than the most charming, more lovely than the loveliest, sweeter than the sweetest, more beautiful than the most beautiful and more admirable than the most admirable ? II-3.

Lakṣmī (the Goddess of Wealth), after coming across Thy well-known

lovely form, does not stay long even with Her own devotees, as She is full of longing to see Thee. Therefore, Oh Lord Achyuta, as She was firm in Her affection for Thy lovely form She has earned a name for fickleness.

II-4.

Oh Husband of Lakṣmī! Let me give another proof to show that if Lakṣmī does not stay with others (devotees), it is because She is so much attracted by Thy personal charms! She always keeps company with those who meditate upon Thee and take delight in singing Thy praises.

II-5.

Thy form, which showers fresh and flowing nectar of charms in abundance, which is full of bliss and knowledge, which captivates the hearts of hearers, attracts the mind at once, fills it with ecstasy, makes the hair stand on end all over the body, and also bathes it in overflowing streams of cool tears of joy.

II-6.

Such being the case, Yogi adepts say that Bhaktiyoga is far superior to Karmayoga and Jñānayoga. Oh! Thou Husband of Rāmā, surely devotion to Thee, in the form of intense love for Thee, who art the very soul of beauty,

II-7.

is within easy reach of all men in the world.

The path of Karmayoga, which consists in the performance of one's obligatory duties without reference to the results, takes a long time for its realization, while Jñānayoga acquired by the study of the Upaniṣads, from its inscrutable nature, is very hard to realize. Oh Lord! devotion to Thee is, therefore, sweeter and better.

II-8.

Performing laborious Karmas, men become purged of all sins: but what does it matter to us? There are others, who, without being free from passions, take pains to study Vedānta-Śāstra and meditating upon Thy Absolute form (Parabrahma Swarūpa) attain success (Mokṣa) after several births.

II-9.

Oh Lord, devotion to Thee is superior to everything else. Devotion which comes of diving deep into the overflowing nectar of Thy interesting tales; which easily puts in the way of realizing Brahma and which bears immediate fruit. Oh Lord of the temple of Guruvayur! May I soon have the very same devotion, which is nothing but intense love of Thy feet, and which removes all passions and melts the heart.

II-10.

Dasaka III

BHAKTAS AND BHAKTI

I consider those devotees alone blessed who take delight in Thee, who go from place to place uttering Thy holy Names, meditating upon Thy form and thus getting immersed in the ocean of supreme bliss and telling at the same time stories of thy good deeds.

III-1.

Oh Lord! Have mercy on me. Alas! My mind is tormented by diseases! pitiable!!—is indifferent to the pleasures in the service of Thy feet. May I live in some lonely place taking delight in meditating on Thy lotus feet and in uttering Thy holy Names.

III-2.

What is not possible for men to achieve if only they have Thy mercy ? The removal of my afflictions is but trifling ! What devotees of Thee do not always become free from afflictions and worldly attachment and go about freely ?

III-3.

Oh Lord ! The well-known sages like Nārada move about in the world without any restraint. Their movements are mysterious. They are free from afflictions by contemplating on Thy lotus feet and are immersed in the stream of the One Supreme Knowledge, viz., Sat, Chit and Ānanda (Being, Knowing and Bliss).

III-4.

May my devotion to Thee be on the increase. That very same devotion will stamp out all miseries. I have not the least doubt about it in my mind. Otherwise the words of Vyāsa, Thine own words and the Vedic texts would sound hollow like the words of the man in the street.

III-5.

Thy devotion is very pleasing even in the outset, because of the interest one takes in Thy wonderful qualities. On its advancing a little, it allays all worries and cares: and in the end, it gives to the mind that supreme delight coupled with pure knowledge: and what more is there to be wished for ?

III-6.

Cast off all my sufferings and make my feet desirous of reaching Thy temple, my hands eager to do Thy Pūjā (worship): and make my eyes feast on Thy form: make my nose smell the Tulasī offered at Thy feet and my ears listen to Thy wonderful deeds.

III-7.

May that form of Thee, which is full of bliss and knowledge, arise in my mind rudely shaken by numerous mental and physical sufferings, so that I may have my hair standing on end and shed tears of joy in such a way as not to feel the attack of my pain which cannot be easily removed.

III-8.

Oh Lord of the Guruvayur temple, even those that are indifferent to Thee enjoy happiness. As regards myself, I am suffering very much, although I am Thy ardent devotee. Oh Varada (grantor of boons) ! Oh destroyer of Kārṣīsa, see that Thou dost not get a bad name on my account. Pray ease me of my sufferings and make me second to none of Thy devotees.

III-9.

Enough of prolixity ! Until Thou extendest Thy mercy, I am sure to pass my days at Thy feet before me leaving off my cry of lamentations, bowing to Thee, singing Thy praise and worshiping Thee.

III-10.



The Practice of Divine Life

By S. S. NOOR

It is the experience of Man that since his very birth or rather inception, he seems to be striving for 'something' and this too is evident that struggle goes on growing with his growth. Of course what that 'something' is he knows not in its full detail, but still he seems to have this vague idea that 'something' will give him eternal peace and happiness. Sometimes he toils and moils hard to hoard glittering Gold in the hope to achieve his aim, and again he runs after Beauty; but the more he seeks after one thing or other the more he is disappointed. Every charming object which seemed to assume the air of complete satisfaction deceives him sooner than he expected. Disappointment after disappointment sets him a thinking and he must, ere long, come to realize that he is looking for happiness where it is not. He realizes at last that worldly pleasures, however great they may be, are ephemeral and transitory and will not give him the everlasting peace which he craves after. The worldly joys are intermixed with pain, sorrows, tribulations, anxieties, sufferings.

Tired of his vain search, he sooner or later resorts to Religion. Religion is a latin word. 'Re' means 'again'; 'Legio', 'to join or tie'; to tie the Individual Soul to its real Source again! To unite the little 'self' to the Overself! "Religion is the manifestation of Divinity already in Man." Religion is faith for knowing and worshipping God. It is the perception and realization of true self. Religion

must give us steadiness of mind and everlasting peace. Those who fight in the name of religion have not understood it and are groping in the dark. Essentials of all religions are the same.

Religion teaches man that if he wants to be happy, he must control his lower nature, his senses, making best use of them, realizing his supremacy over the sense-organs and directing and guiding his energies into proper channels so that he may be able to realize his identity with the supreme Self. To gain control of mind is a great achievement and success. Nothing is difficult for a man who has controlled his mind, because mind makes the world. World is a creation of mind and has no existence apart from it. Control of mind is achieved by practice and renunciation and by leading a regular, Sattvic and divine life.

Essentials of Divine Life are described in Ślokas 1 to 3, Chapter 16 of *Rāgavad-ītā*:

"Fearlessness, purity of mind, steadfastness in the Yoga of wisdom, alms-giving, self-restraint and sacrifice and study of the Scriptures, austerity and straightforwardness; (XVI.1)

Harmlessness, truth, absence of wrath, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of the habit of hearing tales, compassion to living beings, uncovetousness, mildness, modesty, absence of restiveness; (XVI.2)

Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of enmity and pride—these are his who is born with divine properties, O Bhārata." (XVI.3)

Man is divine by nature; but by the force of 'Sam-skāras' he has forgotten his real being. To awaken the dormant divine qualities, he has to exert much. As he has to work hard to acquire secular knowledge, as he has to toil from morning to evening to earn his livelihood, so naturally he has to make strenuous efforts to shake off the veil of ignorance for the manifestation of divine qualities already in him. There is no short cut to success in the material or spiritual world. He who desires to rise, evolve and elevate himself, must bestir himself. There is no gain without pain. Little is gained by verbal discussion and vain imagination. He must act in the living present and must obey the commands of the Inner Voice ever urging man to Right Action. "The Grace of the Conscious Light upon the apparent self (Jīva) fulfils itself in an impulsion from within or compulsion from without for human effort."

As soon as a man gets real craving for spiritual uplift, God sends him a Guide. No sooner is the disciple ready, than the Master appears. He will automatically come to know the Sādhana suitable to his taste, temperament and bent of mind. Success in any Sādhana will depend upon the following preliminaries, which are like preparing the ground for sowing the seed.

GOOD HEALTH

The aspirant should take care of his health and body *to keep fit*. His diet should be simple, wholesome, non-irritating, and easily digestible. Nature is the best doctor. Running after physicians for ordinary ailments, introducing foreign drugs into the system indis-

criminately, too much thinking of disease, fits of anger, etc., will ruin his health. On the other hand, moderate exercise, Yogic Āsanas, morning walk, sun-bath, oil-bath, air-bath, fresh air and water, good and nourishing dietary adjustment, good thoughts, rest, relaxation, sound sleep and well-regulated life will keep him healthy and energetic and able to turn out greater amount of work efficiently, without strain or fatigue.

RIGHT CONDUCT

His behaviour in and outside his house should be exemplary and should reflect his high character and morals. He should speak Truth politely and gently without causing annoyance. He should not harm others by his thought, word or deed. He will not quarrel on religious discussions. He will be regular and punctual in discharging his duties. He would not lose his temper and would keep his wits about him at all costs. He would keep his things in order and in good arrangement.

BRAHMACHARYA

By Brahmacharya is here meant the preservation of semen, the seed of man, the vital force, the life itself, which when transmuted into Ojas Śakti increases the intellectual and spiritual powers indefinitely. It is the most important virtue to keep one strong, healthy and active for a longer period of life. The married man who visits only his wedded wife at intervals for the sake of progeny or to keep the line of progeny is considered celibate.

An essence of the Sādhanas suitable to a busy worldly man in his everyday life can be something like the following.

These methods are not antagonistic but are complementary and may be adopted with necessary modifications or alterations to suit one's taste, temperament and capacity. The brief description made hereunder will only serve as an inspiring hint to the aspirants, whose inner urge will seek the details according to their choice.

SĀDHANAS

Action—Man's duty is to act well and nobly, to do his duties that lie nearest him. He is ordained by Nature to act. He cannot refrain from action even for a fraction of a second. Act he must, only his actions must be in harmony with the Divine Law. He must act for the service of humanity without expectation of fruits, the noblest and highest aim of human life. At every inch of his career in whatever sphere he may be, he will find opportunities to help and assist others. He will keep this idea in view in the discharge of his daily duties. Why should he do so? Because a selfish and self-centred man can never be happy and that man is a social being and he has no existence apart from society. In the good of others lies his own welfare. The supremacy of man over the rest of creation lies in the fact that man must not live for the gratification of his own desires and fancy.

"People think that happiness lies in being served by others, while it really lies in serving others."
(Milton)

The essence of Karmayoga is to discharge the duties entrusted to him, by Nature to the best of his ability without any idea of reward and thinking himself as an agent of the Almighty and

offering all his acts unto the Lord, balanced in pain and pleasure, and serving humanity with Atmic Bhāva. This will soon purify his mind and will ultimately lead him to higher realms of spiritual attainment.

KIRTANA AND JAPA

Let me be Thine, O Love !
But for an hour;
I yield my heart and soul
Unto Thy power.
Let me be Thine,
O Love of mine !
But for an hour.

Singing of divine names, or hymns in praise of God with Bhāva to one's heart's content is *Kirtana*. A devotee melts into tears and dances in devotion to his Lord while chanting the Divine Name.

मथुर मधुरेस्योऽपि मङ्गलेस्योऽपि मङ्गलम् ।
पावनं पावनेस्योऽपि हरेनमिव केवलम्॥

"If there is anything sweeter than all sweet things, more auspicious than all auspicious objects and more purifying than all purifying agencies, it is the NAME OF HARI AND HARI ALONE."

Japa is repetition of a sacred Divine name mentally or aloud with intense devotion, love and without any expectation of fruits. It is an inner outburst of pure love for the Overself.

Some lonely, clean and airy place in the house may be set apart for *Japa*. This should exclusively be used for Mantra-japa or meditation, study of scriptures, etc. and for no other purpose, and may preferably be kept under lock and key. If one can afford to get a suitable place outside his house on the bank of a river or in a garden, so much the better. Here, he should make his

seat of Kuśa grass, deer-skin and woollen cloth. The time for Japa is just after getting from bed or just before going to bed, when the mind is relaxed. Early morning from 3 A. M. till sunrise is Brāhma-Muhūrta, when the world is still asleep and there is a peculiar calmness prevailing in the atmosphere. Sunrise, sunset, midday, midnight are intervals when the natural phenomena have a peculiar effect on concentration of mind. Ekādaśī, Amāvasyā (New Moon) and Pūrṇamāsi (Full Moon) are special days for the practice of intense meditation as on these days the moon exercises a tremendous influence over the ocean waves and the spiritual forces are said to be released by Providence to aid the struggling seekers.

Seated firmly in an easy pose, with Padma, Siddha or Swastika Āsanas, with head, neck and back erect, driving all thoughts off the brain, thinking upon one's Deity and His good qualities, repeating His Mantra with profound reverence, attention and love, he should sit as long as he can concentrate. The period of Japa may be prolonged slowly. Gradually the substance of the mind will take the shape of the syllable repeated. The mind will be purified and the worshipper will melt into the object of worship and the seer, the Sādhana, and the sight will become one.

While practising Japa, the devotee's mind sometimes and quite unknowingly gets externalized and diffused, but at other times it reaches great depths of profound concentration. The difficulty is that the change or transition from the concentrated to the diffused state of mind and *vice versa* is beyond easy detection

of the devotee himself; he should, therefore, be wide awake and watchful.

Further the practicant should be very vigilant and careful that he does not fall a prey to drowsiness and sleepiness, and that the utterance of holy syllables does not become a routine work. He should start Japa immediately the supervention of sleep ceases and must not bemoan such supervention, as it would only act as a distraction in the practice. He may, however, adopt the pose known as Vajrāsana, start Prāṇāyāma, do Japa aloud or Kirtana while standing.

DHYĀNA OR MEDITATION

Meditation consists in practising repetition of the Divine Name with deep religious emotion, the mind itself functioning as speech. The organ of speech is quite still and perfectly at rest, but the mind is conscious of the articulation of Mantra. In meditation the mind is quite perceptible and its movements can be perceived easily then and there and one can check the intrusion of extraneous thoughts as and when they occur. The mind is steady and restful and does not run after objects of sense-perception. Meditation may well be pictured as an escape into the realm of superconsciousness. It is a state of mind in which perception transcends the limitations of the senses.

Success in meditation will not come until he disbands the conflicting hosts of desires that perpetually carry on their civil war within him and comes to be at peace with himself.

The devotee would first picture in imagination the particular Form which

he loves most. He would dwell upon that, allowing his feelings to flow out towards it in affection, adoration and admiration. He would picture himself as in the company of the divine being, associated with Him in the incidents of His life. Then when His feelings were at their height, he would make an effort to pass from the outer form to realize the feelings and thoughts which inspire that divine form in such adorable ways, and would think how these gave rise to the wholly delightful exterior, and thus his own feelings would be transformed. He would begin to realize with ardent devotion the fine characteristics of the divine nature and ultimately perceive this divine nature everywhere and in all things. On further progress he would realize that all exist in God and each represents Him:

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind (thoughts and imagination) is stayed on Thee."

YOGA*

The underlying principle of the Yoga system is that the source of thought on the one hand and of breath and vital forces on the other is one and the same. Effective control of one will automatically bring the other into control. Yoga consists in effecting 'manolaya' or subsidence of mind by means of Prāṇalaya or subsidence of breath and vital forces, which is brought about by the practice of Prāṇāyāma, Mudrās, Bandhas and Āsanas. An ordinary busy worldly man, having little time at his disposal, is not advised to take up this

* योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ।

Yoga is the suppression of the modifications of mind-stuff.

path, which is fraught with difficulties, and should be followed under the direct guidance and supervision of a living master.

Deep and placid breathing will help the aspirant a great deal in control of mind. The Śirṣāsana, Sarvāṅgāsana etc. are very useful for health.

VICHĀRA OR "SELF-ENQUIRY" METHOD

Sit as described above. Try to still your bubbling thoughts. Relax. Fix your gaze gently in between the two eyebrows. Inhale and exhale as slowly as possible. Enquire into the self: Who am I? Whence am I? Am I this physical body? Consider its various parts: Certainly I cannot be the body. Body undergoes changes of boyhood, youth and old age; yet the sense of 'I' remains constantly the same. The body decays and dies. Certainly I am not the body. What, then, am I? The invisible mind which uses this aggregate called the body? Examine the mind and its various modes of action —anger, fear, trust, doubt, kindness, reverence, pride, etc. Am I mind even? No, no. Am I, then reason or faculty of discrimination? Surely not. Because when I am in deep sleep, nothing of these things exist; while 'I' still lives and when I wake up I say "I slept a sound sleep." After instituting these queries, pause expectantly for an answer. Repeat the same question after one or two minutes. Carry on the exercise for 5 to 10 minutes to start with.

This interesting investigation of the self would lead to the rejection of the false identification of the 'I' with the body and the mind, since they are predicated of something which is ulterior to both of them. By this

dispassionate and incessant investigation, the practicant would arrive at the conclusion, not an abstract deduction based on discursive thought but by immediate and indubitable experience, that what is real in him is Sat-Chit-Ānanda (Existence-knowledge-Bliss absolute).

One inevitable result of following the self-enquiry method will be that his attitude towards people and events will gradually change. He will begin to express the qualities natural to the Overself, the qualities of noble outlook, perfect justice, the treatment of his neighbour as himself. Though in the beginning this method of 'self-enquiry' is a mental process, an intellectual activity, yet gradually there would be yielding up of all thoughts to the intuitive feeling which arises from within and which leads one's awareness to the Innermost.

Because I had forsaken unity with
thee,
Because I, fool, had made my body
me,
Because I did not know Thee who
didst dwell in me,
Therefore, I wandered through raging
hells.....
Because I threw away my very self,
I therefore was in chains.

EASY SĀDHANA

For a man who is too busy to spare a fraction of an hour or so to sit for practice of any of the above methods, or when he is on tour, it is recommended that he should pause after every two hours for a minute or so, close his eyes, drive all thoughts away for a moment, empty the brain and think of God and His Divine qualities, love, mercy, truth, joy,

perfection, purity. He will remind himself of his real nature, feeling that he is the silent spectator of all that is happening around. He may open his eyes after a minute or so and start his work. He will feel a tremendous energy flowing into him. His nerves will be refreshed and the strain over the brain will be off. He may follow this method whenever he happens to get up from bed during the night. Practicants of other disciplines or Sādhanas may take advantage of this device with great advantage. It is important that during the pause the Sadhaka should try to relax his body and nerves as completely as possible, to derive full benefit.

SELF-SURRENDER

'Hear thou again My supreme word, most secret of all; because thou art dearly beloved of Me, therefore, I will tell thee what is good.'

(Gītā XVIII. 64)

'Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thou shalt come even to Me; truly do I promise unto thee, (for) thou art dear to Me.' (XVIII. 65)

'Abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins: grieve not.' (XVIII. 66)

Submission to a higher Will and surrender to Him of all that one is or all that one has is the only proper course for the human soul to take. Do your work as offering unto the Lord. Work is worship, if done in the right spirit. Surrender your mind, feelings, intellect and everything to the Lotus-Feet of the Lord. Take refuge in the Divine Will. The infinite universe is being controlled and directed by some Intelligence behind it. It is moving and working under a

certain definite Law and Order. Merge your little 'self' into the Overself and break your limitations. Rādhā asked Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa why He loved His Flute so much that He would never part with It. The Lord replied that the Flute had emptied Itself for Him. So make room for the Divine Presence to come out of the inner chamber of your heart. No sooner do you surrender yourself without reservation to Him than you are surely to achieve the aim of your life.

O Lord, my God, do thou Thy holy Will;
I will lie still.
I will not stir, lest I forsake Thine
Arm and break the charm,
Which lulls me clinging to my
Father's breast in perfect rest.

Renunciation is from mind and not from body. You need not renounce the world, which is a great school for training your will, testing your character and

developing your latent energies. If you can remain in the world but away from its temptations, you are really a brave man and will lead a Divine Life, which is expected to be led by the man who is the superior creature of God.

Resolve upon true success in life to live and grow in accord with the Great Law. Say to yourself 'I will' and your difficulties will turn into stepping-stones to success. You will soon find that you have done three things. Firstly, you have taken to the Right Direction, secondly, to keep to it and, thirdly, to drive on slowly, steadily but SURELY.

Let Love's bright sunshine play upon
your heart;
Come now unto your gladness, peace
and rest.
Bid the dark shades of selfishness
depart,
And now and evermore be truly
blest.

Our Ideal King and Queen

BY SWAMI ASESHANANDA

A doubt arises in the mind of Vālmīki and he puts a pertinent question to sage Nārada—"In this world, today, who is the most arresting figure, bravest and best, well-versed in the art of government, truthful to the core and firm in vows?" The Ṛṣi thought for a while and then answered in unmistakable terms without doubt or a faltering tone—"Descended from the race of the Ikṣwākus, he is known to men as Rāma, endowed with all noble accomplishments—valour and vigour, sweetness and serenity—ever intent on the protection of the good and ever devoted to the well-being of the lowly and the lost." Then

the sage narrated at length the wonderful deeds of this mighty and majestic personality in glowing colours with deep fervour and emotional thrill.

Time rolled on. One day, while roaming in the forest, the ascetic came across a very touching scene. Vālmīki saw in front of him the horrid picture of the death of the male bird with his limbs covered all over with blood and heard the plaintive cry of his mate—the female bird in poignant grief and burning sorrow. Although innocent of poetry, verse came automatically from his lips and he denounced the act in immortal refrain:—

मा निषाद प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शाश्वतीः समाः ।
यत्कौब्रिमधुनादेकमवधीः काममोहितम् ॥

"Oh hunter, cursed be thy name. Ye shall have to reap an ignoble fame for endless centuries since ye have killed heartlessly one of the couple of Krauncha birds whilst in the most intimate transport of love."

Verse after verse came later on and the most astute and austere monk became a poet, depicting the human passions and feelings with the diction of a master-artist and with the sentiments and pathos of an ardent lover. Having had its origin from the spontaneous outflow of compassion for the wounded and the afflicted, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, one of the grandest achievements of Indian genius, has acted as a tonic and a soothing balm to many a disconsolate heart since the day of its composition. What a great relief the story has given to minds perplexed by fear, overwhelmed with grief and pierced with thousand shafts of an aggrieved life. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is being widely read even today by millions of devoted Hindus from the Himalayas to Cape Camorin which represents in true colours the culture and civilization of this most ancient Indo-Aryan race. The 'Lilā' of the Divine Child murmurs like the water of the sacred Bhāgirathī in melodious notes of sweet harmony:—

रमुपति राघव राजा राम । पतितपावन सीताराम ॥

As a son or a husband, a friend or a ruler of men, Śrī Rāma portrays the greatest and the highest ideal that the human mind has ever conceived of. Even at the present time the illustrious example which he has left behind are our priceless possessions although bereft

of all earthly treasures and worldly values. No other hero or heroine has excelled Śrī Rāma and Śrī Sītā in translating into practice the principles that adorn a virile manhood and a noble womanhood. They mirror the twin ideals of the East—"Renunciation and Service". They embody the true patterns of ideal king and queen—ever-loving, ever-soliciting for the peace and prosperity of their subjects without caring for their own pleasures and lives even. Rightly does Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of modern India, say—"You may exhaust the literature of the world that is past, and I may assure you that you will have to exhaust the literature of the future before finding another Sītā. Sītā is unique; that character was depicted once and for all. She is the very type of the true Indian woman, for, all the Indian ideas of a perfected woman have grown out of that one life of Sītā; and here she stands these thousands of years, commanding the worship of every man, woman and child throughout the length and breadth of the land of Āryavarta. There she will always be, this glorious Sītā, purer than purity itself, all patience and all suffering. Mark my words. Sītā has gone into the very vitals of our race. She is there in the blood of every Hindu man and woman; and we are all children of Sītā. Any attempt to modernize our women, if it tries to take our women apart from that ideal of Sītā is immediately a failure, as we see every-day. The women of India must grow and develop in the foot-prints of Sītā and that is the only way."

And what to speak of Rāma? The improvement of the state and the happiness of his subjects were the main-

springs and inexhaustible fountainhead of all his varied activities. Faithful to his words, he is ever ready to sacrifice his all, for upholding truth and righteousness. Throughout the Epic he stands head and shoulders above personal interest and self-aggrandizement. Nothing was dearer to him than people's satisfaction, not even beloved Sītā or affectionate Lakṣmaṇa. Did he not abandon them for their sake? History will bear testimony to this fact. Śrī Rāma considered that wealth and prosperity did not belong to him. He was a mere custodian, a trustee of vast riches and extensive kingdom which were to be rightly used for the people's safety and betterment. His door was wide open to all. Everybody had free access and perfect liberty to speak out his mind. Freedom of action was granted to all, irrespective of creed or community, caste or colour, if it was not detrimental to the collective interest of the whole country. The clear and distinct promise couched below emphatically brings out the inner prompting and the ruling passion of his heart:—

सङ्केते प्रपन्नाय तवासीति च याचते ।
अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्यतद्रूपं मम ॥

“To him who seeks my protection even once and requests help of me saying ‘I am yours’, I shall give him protection and fearlessness from all enemies. This is my vow. This is my resolution.”

It is no wonder that such a king will create confidence in the minds of his people and bring cheer to their drooping hearts. Because Śrī Rāma based his government on the solid rock of altruistic principles, it was marked by an all-round development of material prosperity,

intellectual proficiency and spiritual felicity. It was a reign of law and order mellowed by the softening touch of benevolence and mercy. Kingdom of peace was established and there was perfect amity and unity of hearts all over the land. How beautifully the picture has been painted by the poet-sage and inspired historian Vālmīki who cannot be charged with any selfish motive as he was a saint, a truth-teller, whose pen would rather stop than portray a picture covered with the blemish of mean flattery or vile sycophancy. In *Uttara Kāṇḍa*, the hallowed Kavi-Guru, the first teacher or composer of epic-poetry, writes—“When the worthy and wise Rāma ruled, the earth was full of grains and the trees were full of fruits. His benign kingdom was free of all evil-doers and no calamity ever befell on anyone. No son died before his father nor was there poverty, sickness or mental suffering. Everyone was happy and devoted to Dharma. Lest Rāma should be hurt, no one injured another. Under his regime the land was overflowing with peace and plenty. People were emulating the spotless character of their hero and heroine and the whole country was reverberating with the blessed name of Rāma-Sītā, the friend, the father-mother and saviour of the poor and the destitute.” Undoubtedly, Śrī Rāma was a great power and an all-paramount king in his days but his land was never soiled with any tainted money or with the exploitation of the property of the dumb-millions. Nor did he apply any imperialistic method for the swallowing of less fortunate and weaker nations. Even today when the Hindus speak of an ideal state repeat in joyful tongue and grateful

memory—It is Ramarajya—the government of Rāma. May this ancient lore bring happiness on earth and establish peace and friendship among nations in a world so sadly obsessed by the greed of power and the rancour of hatred and distrust.

To conclude let us tune our voice in a united symphony and pray to the Lord to usher in a new dawn of freedom for India—our thrice-blessed Punyabhūmi, at no distant date.

भवहर मङ्गल दशरथ राम । जय जय मङ्गल सीताराम ॥
आनन्दामृतवर्षक राम । आश्रितवस्तल जय जय राम ॥

Atman

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

Thou art the golden oil feeding the flame of Love,
Thou the strong root staying the mighty tree,
Thou the deep shimmering darkness of our waking day,
Thou the clear radiance shining in our night.

Thou art the longing impulse of the human heart
Making it yearn for vaster life and truth
And greater sacrifice in joyful holocaust
Of all the baser stirrings it enshrouds in secrecy
In baneful temples glorifying self
Far down in the recesses of its mazy depths.

Thou makest it in freedom rise and turn
To Thee and Thee alone, and worship Thee
In silent adoration on the altar in its holy shrine,
Though seen by none but its own love of Thee,—
Freed from all trammels of a lifeless creed
Put in Thy stead for slaves, by man, and poisoned by his narrowness,
By his fierce hate of all who break the prison-bars
He in his age-old blindness still proclaims
To be no bars at all, nay, the only path
For all whom Thou wilt save and lead to Thee.

Longing and yearning and the sharp, dark, groping pain
Of passionate frustration are Thy messengers
To goad us on and on through untold misery and doubt,
Through coils and coils of empty, blank despair,
Until one day we come to Thee in Thy Pure Essence,
Stand transfixed, and are absorbed into Thy Splendour
And Thy Truth,—fulfilled, made whole in Thee,
At rest, at peace; while Time lies shattered
In the infinite fathomless void of Thine abyss
Where things that were not nor have ever been
Float phantom-like, dissolve, fade, disappear
Into Thy Light shining unchanged, unchangeable,
Beyond all form and thought and the weird web of life,
Eternal, One, knowing no manifold.

Japa of the Divine Name

Further Appeal in the interests of Humanity

हरे राम हरे राम राम राम हरे हरे ।

हरे कृष्ण हरे कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण हरे हरे ॥

As usual an appeal for mass Japa to an extent of ten crores of the above Mantra was issued this year as well. Since the appeal was published rather late, it was apprehended that the total might not reach the figures of last year. But through the grace of God the total number actually done has reached the figure of fifty crores, ten lakhs, seventy thousand and nine hundred (50,10,70,900) Mantras. Information has so far been collected from 551 places, the names of which are given below. We express our heartfelt gratitude to those brethren and sisters who have participated in this mass Japa.

We are passing through a most critical period. The Divine Name is the sovereign remedy for all ills. We, therefore, appeal once more to all the readers of the 'Kalyan' and the 'Kalyana-Kalpataru' to make special endeavours this time to see that Japa of the above Mantra to the extent of 100 crores may be completed before the next Prabodhini Ekādaśi (which falls on the 18th November this year). We assure them that this will do immense good to them as well as to the world at large. We request those who take part in this Yajña to intimate to us without fail the total number which they are able to complete by that time. Information has been received this time from the following places:—

Abhout P. O. Pindra, Abu Road, Adas P. O. Anand, Aghwanpur, Agra, Ahmedabad, Ahmednagar, Akbarpur, Akola, Akot, Alampura P. O. Fatehabad, Aligarh, Allahabad, Alleppey, Almora, Alwar, Amaljar, Amalner, Amarpur, Ambagarh, Ambah, Ambala Cantt, Amod, Amraoti, Amreli, Amritsar, Anandpura P. O. Bahadurpur, Anandpura Kalu P. O. Jodhpur, Anantapur, Anantnag, Anda P. O. Konoh, Andheri, Anklesvar, Ankola, Aon P. O. Magradhar, Aphar, Arbagal P. O. Surajgarh, Ashogi P. O. Amawan, Avrad P. O. Khalikhed, Azamgarh, Badalpura, Badnawar, Badausa, Badayun, Badegaon, Bagar, Bagarhatti P. O. Sumbha Deorhi, Baghaul, Bagrega, Bahpura, Bair, Bajrangarh P. O. Banpur, Balakmau, Balaun, Balaun P. O. Manigachi, Balisana, Balrampur, Balsamund, Bambarde, Banari, Banda, Bangalore, Banhal P. O. Dhudhuchak, Banipara P. O. Surat, Bankhandi, Bannapur P. O. Baghauli, Bantva, Barawra, Bareilly, Barid, Barod, Baroda, Barwadih P. O. Kolebira, Baseri, Basti, Begamabad, Belav P. O. Shamshernagar, Belgaum, Benares, Bhainsa P. O. Kanki, Bhariyahu, Bhatgar, Bhatnagar P. O. Pargnapohri, Bhatpara, Bhavnagar, Bhelu, Bhervan P. O. Sarangarh, Bhikangaon, Bhilwari, Bhiwani, Bhojari, Bhomni, Bhoranda P. O. Patan, Bhubooh, Bhuj (Cutch), Bhusaval, Bichhwan P. O. Sultanganj, Bidasar, Bijnoe, Bina-

Etawa, Binaganj, Birdhubhai P. O. Kamseen, Bolai P. O. Gulana, Bombay, Brindaban, Broach, Budh P. O. Mahmud Oot, Budhgaon, Bulandshahar, Bulsar, Burhadana, Burhanpur, Cage, Calcutta, Cawnpore, Chakia, Chakmaka P. O. Chopda, Chakod, Chaku, Chalthana, Chanderi, Chhapra Bhata, Chhatvan Kalan, Chhiam, Chhitauni, Chinnamanur, Chiriyā, Chitaniyan Sheri, Chomu, Chopta, Chouvattia, Chowrai P. O. Vidhanu, Cutch-Mandvi, Dabhoi, Dal-singh Sarai, Damodarpur, Darlpuri P. O. Eti Koppaka, Dasuri P. O. Bikaner, Dehgam, Dehri P. O. Gandwani, Dehwala, Delhi, Deranatthu P. O. Nasirabad, Devas Senior, Devgaon P. O. Kelia, Dhampur, Dhar, Dharamray, Dharamsala, Dharaun P. O. Makhdumpur, Dharnaoda, Dhatiyana P. O. Gonawam, Dholpur, Dhoraji, Dhudhua P. O. Barka Dumra, Dileepnagar P. O. Kasma, Dindori, Doraincha, Doundi P. O. Guhavan, Dullapur P. O. Kunda, Dumaria Khurd P. O. Nayagaon, Dumka, Dunci Katti P. O. Kittur, Ekhlaspur P. O. Bhabua, Erode, Faridkot, Fatehabad, Fatehpur, Gadhota, Gagbana P. O. Ladbura, Gandwani, Gangapur Toka, Garcha, Gargari-malli, Garipha, Gaya, Geya, Ghoravadi, Girwan, Gitasram, Godhra, Gohad, Gon-pura P. O. Chandi, Goraju, Gorakhpur, Gudivada, Gujerat, Gularia P. O. Mirganj, Gulbarga, Gumani Sikandarpura P. O. Mahisar, Gundi Ahni, Gureh, Gurgaon, Haidargarh, Hajipur P. O. Fazilpur, Hanamkonda, Hardwar, Hariharganj, Harsud, Hinumatsar, Hinganghat, Hirauli P. O. Kusmara, Hoshiarpur, Humelwa, Hyderabad (Deccan), Hyderabad (Sind), Idar, Indore, Jafarabad, Jogadhri, Jaipur, Jakhani, Jalalabad, Jalgaon, Jamalpur, Jamnagar, Jamne, Janakpura P. O. Mandasaur, Jaridih Bazar P. O. Bakaro,

Jarsad, Jaso, Jaspalon, Jhagadia, Jhagar-pur P. O. Bara, Jhakhrajan P. O. Sidhaul, Jhanjhmer, Jhansi, Jhargao P. O. Khansyun, Jharia, Jodhpur, Johta, Joshi Math, Jubulpore, Jusa P. O. Sanjeli, Jusari, Kadakuan, Kahalgaon, Kairana, Kalol, Kaluchak P. O. Bihpur, Kamptee, Kankar, Kanke, Kanker, Kankroli, Kara-chi, Karad, Karadkheda P. O. Pichhor, Karamsad, Karauli Road, Karnal, Kasar, Kaseempur, Kashmir, Kasimpur, Kasrawan, Katouna P. O. Rampur, Kavant, Kayadbani, Kelgarh, Khagaul, Khajurda, Khaliapali P. O. Gourpali, Khambhalia, Khambhan Khanti P. O. Lormi, Kharera, Khat-mandu, Khawaspur, Khelari, Khitauli-patti Mali P. O. Thal, Khoripakar P. O. Ballia, Kila Ram Kaur, Kodgal, Kodinar, Kohat, Kokilamari, Kopargaon, Koppal P. O. Hyderabad, Kosmi, Kotah, Kotha, Kotariharda P. O. Gulab-pura, Kothari, Kothia P. O. Lakhimpur, Kumarmunda, Kunda P. O. Pratap-pur, Kundupur, Kurali, Lachhmangarh, Laharpur, Laheriasarai, Lahore, Lakhim-pur Kheri, Lalana, Lalpurvan, Lashkar, Ligaria P. O. Ambah, Lohna P. O. Takula, Lucknow, Ludhiana, Madhuban, Madhukar Chak P. O. Behariganj, Madrak P. O. Shahpur, Madras, Maha-samund, Mahatpur, Mahikanta, Mahisari, Mahmudabad, Mahoba, Mahua, Main-puri, Majhaul, Majni Kheri P. O. Runija, Makhtal, Malad, Malegaon, Malhipatti, Malipur, Malkapur, Malleswaram, Malsar, Malwala Devri, Manan, Manasa, Mandla, Mandsaur, Manigaon P. O. Kishni, Manikpur Bissu, Mani Majra, Manpura (Agra), Manpura P. O. Karera, Marahmatnagar, Marwar Junction, Masi, Masibabad, Meerut, Mehsana, Melman-guhar, Mendra P. O. Jakhania, Mianwali, Mirpur Brasta, Mirzapur, Mirzapur P. O. Bahariabad, Mochh P. O. Tarvatpur.

Mohgaon Khurd P. O. Lakhnadon, Mokhunda P. O. Raipur, Moradabad, Morvi, Mothoha P. O. Saidabad, Muhammadnagar P.O. Bajhera, Muktpuram, Mukteswaram, Multan, Mundi, Munimpur P. O. Tickaitganj, Muraina, Muttra, Muzaffarnagar, Muzaffarpur, Mymensingh, Nabinagar Katesar P.O. Sitapur, Nadiad, Nado, Nagarparkar, Nagaur, Nagpur, Nahan, Naini-Tal, Nairobi (Kenya), Nalapur, Nanat, Nandwai, Napasar, Narayanpur P. O. Hareran, Narwal, Narwana, Nasik, Nasirabad, Nathdwara, Navsari, Nawabganj, Nawadah, Nazibabad, Nesda, Nunhad, Nurpur, Orchha, Padvan Kalan P.O. Suchan Kotli, Pahasu, Pakhaur P.O. Birsinghpur Deorhi, Palla Naya P.O. Jainal, Pallipat, Pamli P. O. Semri Harchand Sohagpur, Panchu, Panjwara, Paratwada, Parbhani, Partabgarh, Patli, Patna, Patory, Pendra, Penth, Petlad, Phaldhara P. O. Vankal, Phaphdar P.O. Murar, Phulkhan, Phullapur P. O. Kunda, Pichour, Pilkhana, Pipalrawa P. O. Sonkatch, Pipariya, Piparjhari Hatta, Pokhri P. O. Gangolihat, Pon P. O. Kalibandar, Poona, Puri, Purkazi, Purnea, Puvayon, Rampur, Rampura, Ramsadan P. O. Khurai, Ranaud, Ranavar, Ranikhet, Ratadia, Ratangarh, Raunahi, Rawal-

pindi, Rewa, Roorki, Rosu P. O. Norwa, Rupauli P.O. Chopra Ramnagar, Ruthyai, Saduka P. O. Limbdi, Saharanpur, Sakrauli P.O. Wakhan, Salol, Sambalpur, Samela P. O. Bajpatti, Samhon, Sami, Sandaulyan, Sandhara, Sangarna, Sangarvera Kalan, Santoshpur P. O. Bakewar, Saragaon, Saraswatpur, Sardarshahar, Sareri, Sarila, Sarkhej, Sarwan, Satara, Satpati, Satshala, Secunderabad, Selodhpur P. O. Beni, Seota, Seu P. O. Rasulabad, Shadara, Shahjahanpur, Shendurni, Sherpur Kalan P.O. Kuresar, Shikarpur, Shiraka, Shin Sagar, Shivarinarayan, Sholapur, Shorapur P.O. Yadagir, Sialkot, Siani, Sidhauli, Sikandra, Sikandra Rao, Sirsa, Sitamarhi, Sitapur, Sohagpur, Sona, Sonada, Subhanpur, Sujangarh, Sukkur, Sultanpur, Sultanpura, Sumerganj P.O. Ramsanehighat, Sunam, Surat, Taloda, Tandamast, Tandur, Tehta, Teranga, Tetia P. O. Haveli Kharagpur, Thasar, Thasra, Tulsipur, Ubhrala, Udainagar, Udaipur, Udanabad P. O. Giridih, Ulao, Umreth, Vaghodia, Vagholi, Vankal, Vengurla, Veraval, Vijapur, Vinukonda, Viramgam, Visanpura, Vithalgarh, Vizagapatam, Wadhwan Camp, Wadhwan City, Wankaner, War, Warora, Wasiketh P. O. Ganai Gangoli, Yeola.

MANAGER,

Nama Japa Section,

'KALYAN' OFFICE,

Gorakhpur.





The Loving Embrace

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANAM KALPDRATARU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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यत्पादपङ्कजरजः श्रुतिभिर्विमृग्यं
यन्नाभिपङ्कजभवः कमलासनश्च ।
यन्नामसाररसिको भगवान् पुरारि-
स्तं रामचन्द्रमनिशं हृदि भावयामि ॥

(*Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa I. v. 47*)

Let our heart constantly meditate on Bhagavān Rāma-chandra, the dust of Whose feet is being sought after by the Vedas, from the lotus sprung from Whose navel came forth Brahmā, the Creator of the Universe, and Whose Name is relished as the sweetest nectar by Bhagavān Śiva.

The Longing for God-Vision

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

Many a friend complain that although they may try their best, God does not favour them with His vision. They describe God as 'cruel', 'hard-hearted', and imagine that the Lord's heart is as hard as adamant and never melts. What interest has He in taking care of us, in granting us His vision, or making us His own? These and similar charges they level against God.

The fact, however, is quite the reverse of it. The Lord's mercy on us is unlimited. He eagerly awaits every opportunity to manifest Himself and tries on every occasion to bless the devotee with His vision. He helps us at every step in all our spiritual effort. It is a common experience in the world that one has to hasten to a place where his affections are centred. He who has special attraction for us compels us to go to him leaving all engagements aside. When one refrains from going to a place, it indicates that love is deficient there. When such is the case with ordinary men like us, where is the wonder that God, who is an ocean of Love and compassion, should be ready to grant us Divine vision, if we possess only a little love for Him?

The main reason for delay in the Lord's manifestation is our want of attraction for Him. He is the very embodiment of Love and Grace. How can He Himself delay in appearing before us? The reason therefore is clear. We lack the qualification to gain His vision.

We are markedly deficient in faith and Love. In order to increase our faith and Love, we should try to the best of our ability to gain the knowledge of His truth, secret, virtues and power. It is never possible that the Lord will not meet a devotee even after the latter has gained faith and Love. He becomes compelled, then, to bring the devotee's faith to fruition. How can we hope to gain the Lord's favour till we have developed complete faith in His Grace? If we come to believe that God-vision can be actually gained, and that a certain person has gained the vision, we can not even guess the depth of attraction we shall exhibit in our behaviour towards him. It is quite impossible to imagine what will be the condition when one actually comes face to face with God Himself.

What was the state of the Gopis when the Lord disappeared from their midst at the time of the Rasa-dance? Separation from the Lord became unbearable to them even for a moment, therefore the Lord was compelled to manifest Himself before them. When Durvāsā, with ten thousand disciples, came and asked for food at an untimely hour, Draupadī finding no means to entertain the guests began anxiously to remember God. The Lord manifested Himself as soon as she uttered her cry of distress, as if He was already present there. Almost all devotees, when they develop faith, gain this experience. Narsi Mehatā had an unshakable faith that the Lord would

come with presents to help in the marriage ceremony of his daughter, therefore absorbed in devotion he began to sing "O child, He will come, He will come, He will come; I have complete faith that the Lord will come". He had not the least doubt about the Lord's coming. Therefore, the Lord was compelled to appear at the proper time.

The only reason for the delay in God-vision is lack of faith. By whatever means the mental resolution is formed, once it is formed, it is impossible that God would refuse to come. He is by nature incapable of disappointing the devotee. If now and then obstacles appear before us and our mind gets perturbed thereby, that is a different matter. But if the devotee refuses to lose his balance of mind during those trials and clings to the Lord with all his might, and declines like Prahlāda to be overcome by the obstacles, he is sure to gain his desired object. The Lord deals with us, now harshly, and now softly, only with a view to strengthen our faith.

Truly speaking faith has such inherent strength that it compels God to manifest Himself in order to bring it to fruition. If the philosopher's stone is a genuine stone, and the iron is pure iron, their contact is bound to transform the iron into gold. The Lord brings success to the faithful devotee by removing all his deficiencies. When faith is properly developed, the deficiencies are automatically removed by the grace of God. It is clear that we lack faith and Love, that is why God does not manifest Himself before us. If not so, looking to His compassionate and loving nature, it appears impossible that the

Lord should rest without granting us His sight. When Rāvaṇa forcibly took away Sītā, Śrī Rāma got so much distressed over the incident that there was nothing to distinguish Him from an ordinary man of the world devoted to his wife. What was the reason for this? The reason was that Sītā could not live without Rāma even for a moment. The Lord says 'in whatever way men worship Me, in the same way do I seek them'.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्नने तांत्रैव भजाम्यहम्

(Gita IV. 11)

The Lord is ever ready to manifest Himself. He, as if, longs that people should love Him so that He might appear before them. If we can develop the intensity of Love which Sītā bore to Bhagavān Śrī Rāmachandra, we shall find the Lord ever ready for us. He who longs for the Lord, the Lord longs for him in the same manner and to the same extent.

That our faith in and love for the Lord may grow from more to more, that our remembrance of Him may remain constant, that we may not forget Him even for the wink of an eye, should ever remain our goal. Let Him keep us in whatever state He likes, in whatever place He likes, but let His remembrance ever remain unbroken and constant with us. Let us feel pleasure in His pleasure and happy in His happiness. If the Lord desires to keep us in hell, we should not cast even a look at Vaikuṇṭha, His own abode, and should feel the greatest pleasure in living in hell. When one completely surrenders oneself to the Lord, he can no longer desire or seek anything from the Lord. When the Lord

becomes ours, and we become His, what else should remain to be accomplished by us ? We are so many children of the Lord. The mother does not care for the defects of her child. Her heart ever remains full of affection for the child. If the Lord begins to examine our deficiencies, we shall be nowhere. He is ever anxious for an opportunity that He may manifest Himself before us. But we ourselves become obstacles in the way of His manifestation. This may not appear from external show; in fact, we may give the impression that we are longing for His sight. But where is that sincere longing of the heart ? We may not actually utter the words, "Not now, Lord, wait still awhile," but our actions clearly say so. The very fact of being able to bear delay in the Lord's manifestation constitutes our asking Him to wait. We are separated from the Lord, because we do not feel sufficiently perturbed over that separation. When we ourselves are prepared to bear the separation, when owing to this separation there is no agitation, no sorrow in our heart, why should the Lord care for us ? There would have been some point in the complaint, if there had been real agitation in us and yet the Lord failed to appear. With pleasure we are alive without Him. And yet if He does not appear before us, wherein lies His fault ? He is, indeed, ever ready to manifest Himself, but till there is craving in us, how can He appear ? The first requisite of God-vision is intense thirst for such vision. The Lord alone knows what should be the character of that thirst. The thirst which compels the Lord to manifest Himself should be regarded as the proper thirst. Therefore, one should

go on increasing this thirst till the Lord actually appears before him. When the vessel will get filled, water will overflow automatically.

The state of Divine Love is a wonderful state. When a talk about God is proceeding and both the speaker and his hearers are absorbed in tasting the sweet nectar of that talk, let it proceed even if God Himself appears on the scene, let it not by any means be disturbed. There is a peculiar sweet taste in all talks of the dearest. When one develops relish for it, he will not desire anything else. The ways of Love are quite peculiar and uncommon. He who has got the relish of Divine Love, what else requires to be accomplished by him ? The Lord examines only one's Love. And Divine Love stands on a higher pedestal than even the Lord Himself. Absorption in Lord's meditation with faith and devotion, with consciousness about the Lord's virtues, power, truth and secrets, means tasting of Divine Love, or being plunged in the Divine essence.

If two lovers take the vow of silence as between themselves, the one whose love is greater will lose in the contest. If the husband and wife start a competition of not speaking with one another, the one whose affection is greater will lose. In the same way, when there is a competition between the devotee and God, the Lord has to accept defeat, for there is none whose love is greater than His. Such an agitation should be created in Him that He cannot stay without us even for a moment. Then He will be bound to accept defeat, and will be compelled to appear before us.

Such is the condition we should create; we should fascinate Him by our love. Then He will not leave us even if we may try to drive Him out by force.

Our attitude towards the Lord should be like the attitude of a wife towards her husband. Just as the wife fascinates her husband by her love and sweet behaviour, even so we should try to fascinate the Lord. Let us without indulging in any flattery make Him feel attracted towards us. He will not then leave our door even for the wink of an eye. A beggar of Love, He will be in the bondage of Love. Where can He go leaving us in the lurch? How can a husband ignore the love of a devoted wife? Even so, how can the Lord be indifferent to the Love of a devotee? When we develop this attitude, He will never be able to stay anywhere without us? He is always bound by His Love. Let us once bind Him by Love, He will then ever remain bound to us.

We should learn from a woman the art of capturing the Lord. We should

cultivate with Him the relation as between a man and his wife. This is cultivation of the sweet sentiment. There is no necessity to change one's dress, but let us be creatures of the Lord through internal sentiment. This is the best way of realizing Him.

The Lord is extremely kind and generous. Therefore, He may be realized if one cultivates only a slight degree of Love for Him, but let us proceed with the Love as depicted above as our goal. For Divine Love can be attained if we proceed aiming at a goal which is sufficiently high. If, according to that goal, we succeed in gaining full Divine Love, it would be a matter of great fortune with us. Such a person will be regarded as an ideal before the world, a sanctifying object of sight. A glance from his eyes will bring spiritual awakening in others; then what more need be said personally about his own self?

(Kalyan)



It is our mind which is the root of all bondage and liberates us from that bondage; a mind attached to worldly enjoyments causes bondage and a mind free from such attachment brings about liberation. Therefore, he who seeks liberation should keep his mind free from all worldly attachment. The highest state (of blessedness) is reached only when a mind free from worldly attachments rises above the mental states (उन्मत्ती भाव).

—*Upaniṣad.*



Thou Camest Not

O Beloved, thou camest not;
Heart's Idol, thou camest not !

Trustfully waiting for thee,
My eyes fixed on the misty road,
My days are drained;—
And thou, Beloved, camest not
To pour thy nectarous balm
Into my pain-laden heart.

Long has my lyre lain mute and broke;
Yet thou camest not to restore,
And tune it with thine own,
And make it once more pour
Its dolorous songs.

Come, Beloved, into this anguish'd life
Of burns and stings,—
Borne on love-songs' lightning wings:
And bring the cooling unction of the soul.

My life's star is setting on the west
Watching the eastern gate.
Even so late, Beloved,
Thou camest not.

O that yet,—even now,
Thou hadst given a touch, a breath,
And the dying spark in embers
Into a flame of gold hadst turn'd.

With heaving and ebbing hopes,
Lifelong I've waited for a sign, a touch,—
Weighted by pain and crushed;
Yet, Beloved, Thou camest not !

—Wanderer.

The Problem of Divine Personality

By AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEE, M. A.

I. THE IDEA OF PERSONALITY

The idea of Personality implies essentially the notion of a self-conscious ego or 'I' and the notion of a free self-determining will. Both these notions appear to involve the idea of individuality, meaning that a self-conscious and self-determining person must be an individual distinguishing himself from other similar individuals. Can this idea of individuality be applied to God, who is conceived as 'One without a second'?

Further, self-consciousness implies, so far as we can infer from the study of the self-conscious nature of man, a plurality of ideas, feelings, experiences and desires, of which the self is conscious, from which the self distinguishes itself, which the self regards as belonging to itself and which it controls, systematizes, organizes and unifies. The existence of consciousness, in the sense in which we normally understand it, appears to be impossible without objects of consciousness, without distinction of the subject from its objects and of the objects from one another. The self seems not to be capable of being conscious of itself as a self or ego or I without reference to such objects. Moreover, we have no experience of self-consciousness except in a society of self-conscious individuals. Now if this analysis of the idea of self-consciousness be true, can God, who is conceived as the one infinite, eternal, changeless, absolute Being, be also consistently thought of as a self-conscious individual?

Again, self-determination or freedom of will seems necessarily to imply some unrealized ideal, which has to be realized by the free exercise of the will. A will that has to will nothing is no will at all. It seems obvious that in a self-determining individual there must be the consciousness of some want or imperfection at the present stage, which it must seek to transcend by dint of its unfettered efforts. In the absence of any want or imperfection, all kinds of physical, moral and spiritual efforts would be groundless and free will or self-determination would be meaningless. Can the conception of such free will be consistent with the idea of the eternally perfect nature of God? If God be eternally perfect and self-fulfilled, can He have any motive for the creative, preservative and destructive activities which are attributed to Him from the standpoint of the cosmos? And if these activities are denied of Him, what can be the ground for believing in His existence as a Supreme Personal Being?

From the above analysis of the conception of Personality it appears that personality can be possessed only by finite spirits,—by imperfect rational individuals distinguishing themselves from one another and striving for moral and spiritual self-realization in co-operation with one another. This category seems to be inapplicable to God, if God is to be at the same time conceived as the infinite, eternal, changeless, differenceless, absolute and perfect One,—the

ultimate Substance and Reality of the universe.

2. THE RELIGIOUS CONCEPTION OF GOD

From the view-point of religious experience, especially of the Bhakta or the devoted worshipper of God, the idea of personality appears to be indispensable for an adequate conception of Divinity. For religion, God is a Supreme Person, with whom man can have personal intercourse. To a religious man, God is infinitely wise and powerful, infinitely good and benevolent, eternally holy and perfect. He has created this boundless world of diversities out of Himself by the sheer manifestation of His will without the necessity of any outside materials. All things, animate and inanimate, owe their origin and sustenance solely to Him. They are all governed by His wisdom and power. All the laws of the physical world, the sentient world and the human world are the expressions of His super-intelligent will. He is above all things as well as immanent in all things. A religious man finds Him everywhere, in all the phenomena of the universe, which are experienced as His free self-expressions. The entire universe with all the amazing diversities within it is viewed as originating from Him, existing in Him, governed by Him in strict accordance with the law of His own perfect will. The order and harmony in the universe implies a design and purpose regulating all its parts and an ideal being progressively realized in it. God, the Supreme Designer, is Himself the Highest Ideal eternally self-realized, and this wonderful universe is a sportive self-manifestation of His perfect blissful nature.

In the eye of the devotee God is not merely the omnipotent and omniscient Creator and Governor of this diversified universe, but also the supremely merciful and loving Personality and the Redeemer of the finite spirits. In His infinite love and mercy He progressively reveals Himself to the finite spiritual beings, and regulates the course of the world and specially the history of human society in such a way as to develop their moral, intellectual and spiritual character, so that they may ultimately enter into direct communion with Him and attain perfect freedom from all kinds of bondage, limitation and suffering. The conscious participation of the finite spirits (*Jivas*) in the perfection of the Divine character, their realization of His holiness and blessedness in themselves, their attainment and enjoyment of spiritual unity with Him, is regarded as the consummation of religion; and this is the ideal which, through His grace and love, is immanently working itself out in this world of God. The world is to the devotee a 'Divine Education'. In spite of all the bitter experiences he gets in this life, in spite of all the catastrophes and agonies in the physical and the animal worlds, all the hatreds and hostilities between man and man, all the atrocities perpetrated by the creatures of God upon one another, a truly religious person never loses faith in the wisdom, goodness, mercy and love of God. The apparent inconsistency he feels between the evils of the world and the goodness and love of the Divine Nature he attributes to his own ignorance, his own inability to appreciate the modes of the Divine self-expression.

When a religious man ascends to higher planes of spiritual consciousness, he finds no evil in this universe, he experiences nothing here incompatible with the supreme wisdom, absolute goodness, perfect blissfulness, infinite love and mercy of the character of its Creator and Ruler. He sees the Lord of his heart dancing in love and joy everywhere. All sins and sufferings are sublimated in his experience. His spiritual insight penetrates into the innermost significance of all the apparent evils and he feels the touch of His love, mercy, purity and wisdom in all of them. He looks upon all the affairs of the world from the Divine standpoint, and the world with all its complexities reveals its inner spiritual character to him.

The conception of such a Personal God freely manifesting His wisdom, goodness, love and mercy in the world-process created and governed by Him and progressively liberating the finite spirits from their finitude and sorrow, is at the foundation of the religious culture of Humanity. Without this belief in the Divine Personality, religion becomes a soulless, tasteless, joyless and hopeless affair. A religious heart does not look to Formal Logic for its guidance. The idea of God as an infinite eternal absolute Reality behind the world and as an omnipotent, omniscient, loving and blissful Person appears to be bound up with the religious consciousness of man.

3. THE METAPHYSICAL CONCEPTION OF GOD

Metaphysicians find it difficult to reconcile the idea of the absolute eternal infinite Reality, which they discover as the ultimate Ground and Substratum of

the universe, with the idea of Personality which religion attributes to this ultimate Reality. Our metaphysical Reason demands at the back of this phenomenal universe an Absolute Reality, above space and time, above causality and reciprocity, above all changes and relations, above all duality and plurality. Such a Reality may be conceived as Pure Being or Pure Consciousness or Absolute Spirit. But how can such a Being be a knowing and feeling and willing Person? Analysis of the conception of Personality has shown that it involves the notions of duality and plurality, change and relativity, causality and reciprocity, unrealized ideal and effort at realization. Until and unless we can rise above these notions, our speculative Reason refuses to be satisfied. It must arrive at a Reality, which exists by Itself, in Itself and for Itself, which is without any creative impulse, which should have no reference to duality or plurality, whether outside Itself or within Itself, which should be absolutely changeless and differenceless. Such a Reality cannot logically be thought of as even conscious of Itself as an individual, not to speak of exerting any will or aiming at doing anything. Accordingly the Ultimate Absolute Reality must be an Impersonal Being.

If this be the true metaphysical conception of God, in what relation can the phenomenal world stand to this Absolute Reality? Certainly the question of any real positive relation cannot logically be allowed to arise; for any kind of real positive relation between God and the world or between God and the finite individual would make God

relative and God would no longer be the sole Absolute Reality. Hence from the standpoint of Impersonal God the phenomenal world must be regarded as having only an illusory existence. The metaphysical Absolute cannot be conceived as the Creator and Governor of this world, and certainly by no means as a loving and merciful Person showering blessings upon the devotees. He is and must be One without a second. The world of plurality must accordingly be conceived as an illusory appearance of this Reality and must, therefore, be due to Ignorance veiling and distorting the consciousness of finite individuals. The presence of this Ignorance is of course inexplicable; and so long as this Ignorance is not got rid of by the finite individual, the world continues to appear as real. When the Ignorance is got rid of, the finitude of the finite individual also vanishes and the difference between the finite and the Infinite also disappears. Hence the apparent finite consciousnesses (Jīvas) also are nothing but finite individualized appearances of the infinite differenceless Consciousness due to the same inexplicable Ignorance. In reality there is only one pure absolute differenceless Consciousness, that is Impersonal God.

4. ATTEMPTS AT COMPROMISE

Various attempts have been made by religious philosophers to bring about a reconciliation between the metaphysical ideal of the Absolute and the religious ideal of the Divine Personality. Some schools of thought have given a subordinate place to the Personal God of morality and religion. To them the Impersonal Absolute Consciousness is

the Ultimate Reality, which appears through the inexplicable Cosmic Ignorance as a plurality of personal consciousnesses, one of them being the Supreme Personal Consciousness, omnipotent and omniscient, perfectly free and good and just and loving, who is related to the other finite imperfect consciousnesses as their Lord and Object of worship. This Supreme Personal Consciousness or God has thus a relative existence like all other consciousnesses and the diverse orders of finite beings, but is superior to them all. He appears to be unquestionably real and self-existent, so long as the finite consciousnesses are subject to Ignorance. When Ignorance is transcended, there is no longer a plurality of consciousnesses, no longer any difference between finite consciousness and infinite consciousness, no longer any distinction between Jīva and Iśwara, but one undifferentiated absolute Being-Consciousness or Impersonal Brahma remains and is unveiled as the sole Reality. The world of diversities, in relation to which God is conceived as the Creator, Governor and Destroyer, is found to have no real existence from the absolute point of view, and hence God's Creatortship, Governorship and Destroyership also is found to be illusory.

One western philosopher, Rev. H. Rashdall, says,—“The Absolute cannot be identified with God, so long as God is thought of as a self-conscious Being. The Absolute must include God and all other consciousnesses, not as isolated and unrelated beings, but as intimately related (in whatever way) to Him and to one another, and as forming with

Him a system or unity. God and the spirits (Jivas) are the Absolute, not God alone. Together they form a unity, but that unity is not the unity of self-consciousness." He further elucidates his conception by saying that "the Ultimate Being is a single Power, manifested in a plurality of consciousnesses,—one consciousness which is omniscient and eternal, and many consciousnesses which are of limited knowledge, which have a beginning and some of which, it is possible or probable, have an end."

Personal God is thus conceived by many schools of philosophy as one of the manifestations of the Impersonal Absolute, though a unique supreme manifestation. He is one among many, He being Paramātmā or Supreme Spirit and the others being Jivātmā or finite spirits. But He is not the Ultimate Reality. Knowledge must transcend Him as well as the other manifestations of the Absolute in order to reach the highest plane. Morality and religion are not satisfied with this conception of a subordinate Personal God.

Various other attempts also have been made to make some room for Personal God without making Him the Ultimate Reality and the Ultimate Ground and Substance of the Universe. The religious heart however is not satisfied by them, inasmuch as it demands the personality of the Absolute.

5. MEANINGS OF ABSOLUTE, INFINITE AND ETERNAL.

The terms Absolute, Infinite and Eternal have a negative significance; and it is in such negative significance that

they are ordinarily understood. In this sense they imply merely the absence of relations, the absence of spatial limitation and the absence of temporal beginning or end. In this sense they are opposed to and incompatible with all relative, finite and changeable things of the universe. But if we accept these terms in this negative significance, can they give us any positive idea of the Ultimate Reality, which our reason seeks for? Can the negative attributes constitute the nature of any Objective Reality? To deny all positive attributes of a Being and to think of It only in negative terms (as 'neti neti'—not this, not that), implies not merely the unknowableness and unthinkableness of the Being, as the Agnostics hold, but it virtually implies the denial of Its real existence. The Absolute, the Infinite, the Eternal, in their negative sense, are empty abstractions. Absolutely negative conceptions are not conceptions at all; thinking and imagining cannot be wholly negative.

Negative conceptions always refer to positive ideas and derive their significance from them. We are acquainted with a plurality of finite related changing objects, and our negative ideas of infinite unrelated unchanging unity are psychologically related to these positive ideas.

It is the monistic urge of our thought due to the positive unity of our self-consciousness that impels us to seek for an explanation of the finite related changing plurality in the infinite absolute eternal unity. If the latter be merely an abstract negative concept, it cannot furnish any real explanation

for the existence of the former; on the contrary, the latter would derive its meaning from the former.

Infinite, Absolute and Eternal may also be conceived positively in contradistinction with the finite relative and changeable objects of our experience. In that case what is regarded as the Infinite Absolute Eternal Being would be limited by the existence of these objects and Its infinity, eternity and absoluteness would be meaningless. If there be a relation of externality and opposition between two real entities,—one infinite and another finite, one eternal and another transitory, one absolute and another relative,—both would be really finite and related.

The advocates of the view try to get rid of this awkward position by denying the existence of this world of finite transitory relative realities apart from the existence of the Absolute. But if the Absolute be conceived as real only in contradistinction with the relative, how can the relative be denied without at the same time leading to the denial of the so-called Absolute? They speak of the world as illusory, appearing as real to the finite understanding. The critics, however, fail to understand how there can be any illusion in the absence of really existing finite consciousnesses capable of being the seats of ignorance or victims of illusion.

One great absolutist of the present age, viz., Bradley, confesses, "We do not know why or how the Absolute divides Itself into centres, or the way in which so divided It still remains one." If we accept this confession, does it not mean that the Absolute

Reality is possessed of some inscrutable mysterious power and will and wisdom, by virtue of which It divides Itself actually into innumerable finite spirits of imperfect centres of experience, and It manifests Itself to them as a multiplicity of finite transitory relative objects without losing Its transcendent unity? Does not our reason demand that for furnishing any rational explanation for the appearance, whether real or illusory, of this world of phenomenal diversities some such power, will and wisdom must be attributed to the Absolute Ground and Substratum, to Which metaphysical speculation leads us?

Āchārya Śankara, the greatest exponent of the doctrine of Impersonal Brahma as the Ultimate Absolute Reality, admits this. He calls this mysterious power *Māyā* and characterizes it as neither real nor unreal from the absolutist standpoint. Such characterization implies that this Power of the Absolute, which is the source of all phenomenal realities, must itself possess only a phenomenal reality and not an absolute or noumenal reality. If this Power of the Absolute had absolute reality like the Absolute Itself, it would itself have been self-existent and there would be no meaning in regarding it as the Power of the Absolute,—as belonging to the Absolute, as having its existence in and for the absolute. It does not and cannot however mean that this Power of the Absolute (*Śakti* of Brahma) is unreal or illusory; for in that case no appearance, no illusion, no form of finite experience and imperfect conception could be rationally

explained. Thus the Absolute—Brahma must be conceived as the infinite eternal absolute Reality, eternally and inherently possessing the unique power, will and knowledge, by virtue of which It manifests Itself as the phenomenal plurality of finite conscious and unconscious beings and at the same time transcends them all and shines in Its undisturbed unity.

6. THE IDEA OF ABSOLUTE PERSONALITY

The necessity for the recognition of the unique power, will and knowledge in the nature of the Ultimate Reality leads us logically to the conception of this Reality as a living dynamic self-conscious and self-determining Spiritual Personality, whose essential character is to manifest the inexhaustible glory and beauty of His nature in and through numberless orders of finite and relative, conscious and unconscious beings and at the same time to enjoy the blissful unity of His transcendent self. But can such a conception of Personality be compatible with the ideas of Infinity and Absoluteness and Timeless Eternity? Yes, true positive conceptions of the Infinite, the Eternal and the Absolute are not merely not inconsistent with the conception of Personality, but the conception of Personality alone can supply adequate positive meanings to those ideas. A positively infinite being is one, of whom all finite existences are self-manifestations, in whom all finite existences exist, who is the True Self of all finite existences, from whom all finite existences are substantially non-different. All the finite existences being from Him, in Him, for

Him, do not limit Him in any way. All space exists in Him, in His consciousness, all spatial distinctions belong to His self-manifestations, and He is above all spatial limitations and differences. This positive infinity can be attributed on to the perfectly self-conscious Spirit. He alone is positively eternal, because the past, the present and the future are all present to and united by His consciousness. The temporal distinctions are the conditions of finite and transitory existences, which are His own self-expressions and therefore non-different from Him.

It is this supreme self-conscious Personality that alone is truly Absolute, not because all relativities are non-existent to Him, but because all relations exist in, by and for His consciousness, because He is the sole Ground and Substratum of all relativities, because all relative existences are His own self-manifestations. He is absolutely free in His self-manifestations in time, space and relativity. He is not forced to manifest Himself in these diversities by any power or any law outside His own eternal infinite blissful nature. The modes and laws of His manifestation are wholly determined by Himself, by His own will, which is indistinguishable from His perfect blissful nature. His will is absolutely free, not only in the negative sense that there is no constraint upon its action, no limitation upon its power, no condition upon which it is dependent for its creative self-expressions, no external law by which it is governed in its self-manifestation, but also in the positive

sense that His will and its fulfilment are really one, that His will is infinitely and eternally blissful and its creative activities are His self-enjoyments. There being no other power standing between His will and its fulfilment, between the ideal to be realized and its actual realization, no effort or expenditure of energy is necessary for His self-determined Cosmic activities. His creative work is not preceded by any sense of want or imperfection or unrealized ideal. His desire for self-manifestation as a universe of finite transitory relative beings does not arise in His mind at any particular point of time or any particular stage of His life-history. His will, His impulse to creation and continuation of a world of plurality, constitutes His eternal nature and is identical with His character of self-enjoyment and is appropriately described as His Līlā or Sport. His creation is without any beginning and without any end. He is eternally creative, eternally playful, eternally self-enjoying. He is not first God and then the Creator of the universe; but it is as God that He is the Creator of the Universe, Creatorship being in His nature.

In truth, self-consciousness and world-consciousness, self-determination and creative action, self-enjoyment and world-government are not distinguishable in His infinite eternal absolute nature. The unity of His perfect consciousness is not broken into different departments of consciousness. His perfect oneness eternally finds expression in, unifies and enjoys the diversified universe within itself. When our

understanding lays emphasis upon the aspect of unity of His nature and ignores His self-manifestation and self-enjoyment in plurality, it naturally conceives of Him as the Impersonal Absolute; but when it takes due note of the fact that He eternally manifests and enjoys Himself in plurality with perfect self-consciousness and freedom of will, it feels rationally compelled to think of Him as a Person. He is thus regarded as both personal and impersonal.

7. MISCONCEPTIONS REMOVED

Self-consciousness and self-determination, which are regarded as constituting the personality of a being, appear to involve the notions of finitude, change and relatedness because we are directly acquainted only with imperfect self-consciousness and imperfect self-determination. It does not pertain to the essential idea of a self-conscious and self-determined being, that he should be related to and distinguished from similar or dissimilar beings outside of himself or that he should be goaded on to exercise his will by any limitation or imperfection in his nature or attainments. This is of course true of human persons with whom we are acquainted, because their self-consciousness and self-determination are imperfect and seek for perfection. Perfect self-consciousness essentially implies that there should be no real existence outside the consciousness of the self and therefore no reality apart from and independent of the self. Perfect self-determination implies that there should be no condition or limitation to the will, no happening anywhere which is not the expression of the will,

no ideal which is not realized in the will. A human person cannot rest contented with and enjoy true bliss in the present state of his consciousness and the present attainments of his will, because his self-consciousness and self-determination have not attained perfection, for which he feels an inherent urge. The eternally perfect self-consciousness and self-determination belong to the Being who is infinite and absolute and He is therefore the perfect Personality. As Lotze, a great western philosopher, says, "Perfect personality is in God only: to all finite minds only a pale copy of it is allotted."

God is consciously infinite and absolute. His existence, His knowledge, His power,—all are infinite and absolute. His infinite and absolute existence He freely and eternally manifests in all possible orders of finite and relative existences, and in His supremely blissful consciousness He witnesses and enjoys all these manifestations of Himself within Himself. The infinity and absoluteness of His existence are revealed in His immanence in and transcendence over all phenomenal existences and in the unification of them all in His blissful consciousness. His infinite and absolute knowledge is manifest in His omniscience. His self-consciousness involves the consciousness of all,—the eternal presence of all the temporal diversities of the cosmos unified in His consciousness. All objects are illumined by His consciousness; they exist as such through this illumination. The all-illuminating consciousness undergoes no change or modification by reason of the changes in the illumined objects,

which owe their existence and appearance to it. The all-pervading all-penetrating all-revealing consciousness of the Supreme Personality is eternally nothing else than His self-consciousness. His omnipotence,—His all-creating all-governing all-destroying power,—is not distinguishable from His self-existence, self-consciousness, self-manifestation and self-enjoyment, because the 'all' are the free expressions of and therefore not different from His self. Thus His omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence are all involved in His infinite and absolute self-existence, self-consciousness and freedom.

When we think of Him from the moral and the aesthetic points of view, we find the infinity and absoluteness of His nature in His infinite and absolute Goodness and His infinite and absolute Beauty. Evil and ugliness pertains to the imperfection of self-consciousness and self-determination. In the perfectly self-conscious and self-determined Personality there is no element of evil, no element of ugliness, no trace of what ought not to be, no idea of any unrealized ideal, no tinge of internal disharmony. In the realm of His self-manifestations He is accordingly conceived as perfectly just and righteous, infinitely loving and merciful, absolutely good and beautiful. In spite of all that we actually experience in this world of diversities, the universe, when looked upon and appreciated as His free self-expression, appears to be an embodiment of goodness and beauty, governed by the law of love, justice and harmony. He is worshipped as the highest ideal of man's moral and spiritual life and the

supreme object of absolute trust, reverence, adoration, love and self-surrender.

Thus, the conception of God as the Absolute Person (Parama Puruṣa) is not only not inconsistent, but is the only conception of the Ultimate Reality which can give perfect satisfaction to the metaphysical as well as the spiritual demand of the rational mind. In the conception of the Absolute Person the distinction between the Personal and the Impersonal disappears, because this distinction is based upon our notion of imperfect relative finite personality manifested in the nature of man. The human personality is progressive, and its true progress essentially consists in transcending step by step the limitations of self-consciousness and self-determination. In the higher and higher stages of the development of the human personality, the distinction between the self and the other, the ego and the non-ego, the 'me' and the 'you' and the 'it', gradually vanishes, the consciousness of the self gradually rises above the limitations of space and time and individuality, the outer world is progressively experienced within the self and the self is experienced as pervading the world. The difference between unity and multiplicity, between the big and the small, between the past, the present and the future, between the 'is' and the 'ought-to-be', which appears to be so

rigid and indispensable in the intellectual plane of consciousness, is progressively dissolved in the higher spiritual planes of self-consciousness. In the highest plane of blissful spiritual self-consciousness the difference between the finite and the infinite, the eternal and the temporal, the inner and the outer, the one and the many, the 'is' and the 'ought', motion and rest, action and inaction, Karma and Samādhi, loses all its significance. The person then experiences the self in all and all in the self, the infinite in the finite and the finite in the infinite, the eternal in every moment of time and time as the dancing movement of the eternal, the absolute Truth, Beauty and Goodness shining in all its glory in whatever appears and disappears in the universe. He finds no inconsistency in Yaśoda's seeing the entire universe in the mouth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna's experience of all the past and the present and the future in the body of his Charioteer. He experiences himself as perfectly free and everything as the expression of perfect freedom. He enjoys everything he experiences and all his enjoyment is self-enjoyment. It is this perfected self-consciousness and self-determination of man which is the direct evidence of the eternally perfect self-consciousness and self-determination of God,—of the Divine Personality or Supra-Personality.



Five Specifics for Self-Purification—VI

Second Series

(Continued from the previous number)

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

CONTENTMENT

Contentment has nowadays come to be regarded as the slogan of the idle and the inactive, who alone, it is said, advocate it in order to find a subterfuge for their indolence. It is the notion of contentment which is said to have deflected Indians from the path of duty and bound them with the chains of political thraldom. The only way to get rid of this bondage, it is said, lies in an evergrowing and widespread discontent. Discontent, they say, is the root of all progress; it makes us realize our position and goads us to march forward. It awakens life, inculcates the spirit of devotion to duty and has all the potentialities of making human life happy.

It is, therefore, that public-spirited men of the present day are trying in various ways to fan the fire of discontent everywhere. With the fire of discontent thus set ablaze they hope to achieve a world revolution, which in its turn will provide all the means of a lasting happiness for mankind. They are even opposed to providing relief to those who are in distress even where we have the means to arrange such temporary relief, however inadequate they may be; for if they are so relieved, the fire of discontent will subside and the advent of revolution will be delayed. Such is

the view of the present-day advocates of progress.

It is, no doubt, true that a sense of discontent is necessary to bring about sustained effort to achieve a definite goal. But what is, or should be, the goal is the question that must be considered in the first instance. The spirit of discontent which aims at gaining pleasure of the senses is not at all a desirable thing, for pleasure of the senses is really no happiness. The greater there is discontent for objective happiness and efforts made to gain it through multiplication of objects of happiness, the more there will be the feeling of want for those objects. The mind of man can never be satisfied with any number of objects, even the rarest among them. King Yayāti had got the youth of his son transferred to him and indulged in sex-pleasures for a thousand years, and yet he could not satisfy his craving for that kind of pleasure. On the contrary, his craving grew more and more intense, and at last the inevitable conclusion dawned on him —

यत् प्रथिव्यां त्रीहिथवं हिरण्यं पश्वः खियः ।
न दुष्टन्ति मनःप्रीति पुंसः कामहत्स्य ते ॥
न जानु कामः कामानामुपमोगेन शास्त्रिति ।
हविषा कृष्णवत्मेव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥
यदा न कुरुते भावं सर्वभूतेष्वमङ्गलम् ।
समदेष्टदा पुंसः सर्वाः सुखमया दिशः ॥

या दुर्स्थजा दुर्मतिभिर्नार्थते ।
तां तुष्णां दुःखनिवहां शर्मकामो द्रुतं त्यजेत् ॥
पूर्णं वर्षसहस्रं मे विषयान् सेवतोऽसकृत् ।
तथापि चानुसवनं तुष्णा तेषूपजायते ॥

(*Bhāgavata* IX. xix. 13–16, 18)

"The possession of all granaries and material wealth, elephants, horses, cows and bullocks of the world, and wives and sons cannot bring satisfaction to the mind of man. Desire cannot be quenched by the enjoyment of objects of desire, it only increases with enjoyment, as the fire is made stronger by libations of clarified butter. When, however, a man never thinks ill of anybody in the world and looks on all beings with an equal eye, all directions of space are then full of happiness for him. He who wants to be happy must at once renounce desire, which is so difficult for men of evil mind to renounce, and which never exhausts even though the body withers, and is always pregnant with grief. I have assiduously pursued these objects of sense-pleasure for a full thousand years and yet my desire is not quenched but has increased the more."

With the increase of desire, whether individual or collective, the sense of want is bound to expand, bringing grief as its necessary consequence.

This earthly, imperfect and fleeting kind of happiness derived from sense-objects cannot, therefore, be the goal of human existence. The goal of mankind is the attainment of that highest happiness, which is everlasting, infinite, perfect, and for ever the same. Thus he who wants real happiness must suppress the desire for sense-objects and remain content with whatever grief or happiness comes to his lot by divine

dispensation. Contentment born of the conquest of all desire brings a kind of happiness which has no parallel either in this or the other world.

यच्च कामसुखं लोके यच्च दिव्यं महासुखम् ।
तृष्णाक्षयसुखरथेते नार्हतः पोदशीं कलाम् ॥

"There is no pleasure either in the enjoyments of this world or of the other, which can equal even the sixteenth part of happiness derived from utter annihilation of desire."

Patañjali, the great teacher of Yoga, says:—

सन्तोषादनुत्तमसुखलाभः ।

(*Yoga-Sūtras, Sādhanapāda* 42)

"Contentment brings highest happiness."

When there is contentment one has naturally to rest in the all-prevading spirit. It is then that real and everlasting happiness of the highest degree is attained. For infinite and unbounded joy, which is eternal, everlasting, all-pervading and imperishable, lies in the spirit alone. This joy is the very nature of the Ātmā, the spiritual Self. Therefore, those who are fixed in the Self, and delight in the Self, have no sense of want at all, and are ever merged in the joy of the Self. The Lord says in the *Gītā*:—

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मनृपश्च मानवः ।
आत्मनन्देव च संतुष्टस्त्वा कार्यं न विचरते ॥

(*Gītā* III. 17)

"He who is absorbed in the Ātmā (Self), is content with the Ātmā, and is delighted in the Ātmā, has verily no duty."

Contentment should never be identified with the mentality of the idle

and the indolent. Far from being contented, the idle and worthless people always burn in the fire of their desire, and their thirst is never satisfied. They have neither the power nor the intelligence to accomplish their work, hence they take shelter under the sacred name of contentment. But the kind of contentment they practise is altogether different from the contentment which is a part and parcel of spiritual life and is one of the principal aids to spiritual discipline. Their contentment is nothing but a Tamasic sentiment. Contentment, which is real, frees a man from his worldly attachments, takes him out of the stream of the burning lava of desire, sets him on the Godward path and makes him sincerely dutiful. The man with a peaceful mind and a contented heart alone can abandon all his individual interests and selflessly work for the good of the country and humanity.

It is a travesty of truth to say that the virtue of contentment has lowered the sense of duty of Indians and made them politically dependant. On the contrary, it is want of contentment and domination of selfish desire that destroyed the high ideals of patriotism, love of humanity and the generosity of the heart which seeks happiness for all, and installed in their place the base motives of acting treacherously against the motherland and the world at large. Under the influence of the desire for enjoyment and petty self-interest man prepares himself to kill the very soul of his people and of humanity and thus through his own folly brings about his ruin. This proves that

discontent is a sign of downfall and not of progress.

Discontent does not produce any awakening. Awakening, in the real sense of the term, is brought about by abundant growth of the Sattvic spirit.

“सर्वदारेषु देहेऽस्मिन् प्रकाशं उपजायते ।”

“When in this body, and in the mind and senses, consciousness and wisdom make their appearance”.....

(Gītā XIV. 11)

Discontent is a serious hindrance to development of the Sattvic spirit and brings in its train fear, hatred, enmity, violence and restlessness in the heart of all, both individually and collectively, and releases on the world a flood of misery and distress. This is the reason why with the growth of discontent in the present-day world the forces of fear, hatred, enmity, violence, restlessness and misery are growing stronger from day to day.

It is surely a grievous mistake to believe that the growing mass of discontent will one day bring about in the world an ideal condition of happiness and relying on that vain hope to neglect the task of relieving the poor and the distressed when one has the means to do it. No sane man should ever commit such a mistake.

The practice of contentment pacifies the craving for objective happiness. He who practises it comes to believe in God and learns to lead his life following the paths of truth and justice, and, when the occasion demands it, can even sacrifice his life for the sake of truth. God alone is the One Absolute Truth, and to

reach and realize Him is the only goal of human existence. Practice of contentment is extremely necessary to realize this truth.

There are two ways of practising contentment. The one is to understand the integral character of the Self, complete by itself; and the other is to depend entirely on the dispensation of God, who is full of auspiciousness and is the greatest friend of us all. Both these ways bring the same happy result. The one indicates the path of Knowledge and the other of Devotion. While describing the marks of a devotee in the *Gitā* the Lord twice used the word 'contented', thereby laying special emphasis on the necessity of practising contentment by those who follow the path of devotion:—

“सनुषः सतं”, “सनुषो येन केनचित् ।”

(*Gitā* XII. 14, 19)

Again, in the fourth chapter of the *Gitā*, the Lord declares:—

यदृच्छालभसंतुष्टे दन्धातीतो विमत्सरः ।
समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च द्रुतवापि न निबध्यते ॥
गतसङ्कल्प्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावश्वितचत्तसः ।
यशायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥

(*Gitā* IV. 22-23)

"He who is contented with whatever is got unsought, who is without envy, and beyond the pairs of opposites (like joy and grief) such a Karmayogi, unmoved by success or failure, is not fettered though acting. For all action done for the sake of sacrifice by that liberated man whose attachment has gone, and whose mind is established in Knowledge, melts away."

This demonstrates very clearly that contentment does not influence a man

to abandon his duty, but leading him on to the firm and tranquil ground of unaffected equanimity makes him forever happy. A man of contentment will always try to make all those who come in contact with him happy.

STRAIGHTFORWARDNESS

With the march of modern civilization, which is wholly devoted to the worship of matter, man's life is being increasingly vitiated by the vices of hypocrisy and deceit. Life outwardly pleasant and attractive may conceal all kinds of vices within. An appearance full of gloss covering a dark and impure mind is the fashion of this materialistic civilization. Straightforwardness and simplicity are considered to be marks of stupidity. An educated youth of to-day may unhesitatingly insult his father by calling him a fool. The beneficial influence of our own civilization is no doubt restraining this process of demoralization to a large extent. But it must be admitted that the rot has begun. Straightforwardness is the mark of a pure and sincere heart. A simple and straightforward heart is a pure heart. A straightforward man will have no hesitation to confess his sins. Fear of derision by others will not deter him from the truth. He has not the skill of hiding his sins behind a cover. He is a stranger to the art of deceiving the world and falsely raising himself in the estimation of others. Such a person may no doubt be deprived of all undue and false honour of the world, but his heart is fortified so strongly that no sin can easily enter it. It is an error on the part of people of this generation to treat straightforwardness as synonymous with

stupidity or ignorance. It is never the same as stupidity, but is a clear expression of purity of the heart. Straightforwardness and pure Sattvic intelligence go together. Thus great philosophers and supermen, whose very utterance becomes the subject of deep contemplation by men of learning and intellect, and requires a regular discipline to be realized in truth, are generally found to be as pure in their simplicity as innocent children. These are the minds which solve the greatest problems of the world and unravel the mysteries of philosophic thought. But they are strangers to diplomatic use of words, intended to make things appear what they are not. Double-dealing is entirely foreign to them. Straightforwardness is a prominent mark of R̄sihood, or the characteristic of a seer. It is an unfailing means of receiving Divine grace. The indwelling compassionate God never makes His appearance before those who are full of deceit and treachery in spite of all their labours at composing hymns and offering them to Him, in spite of all their worship with the most precious articles. For only devotees who are straightforward at heart are dear to Him. It is straightforwardness which makes faith firmly grounded. The dry reasoning of the subtle dialectician is an enemy of faith. And where there is no faith, all labour is vain. The Lord says:—

अश्रद्धया कृतं दत्तं तपस्तसं कृतं च यत् ।
असदित्युच्यते पार्थं न च तत्प्रेयं नो इह ॥

(*Gītā XVII. 28*)

"O Arjuna, sacrifice, gift and penance, and any other action done without faith, is said to be "Asat". It brings no good either here or hereafter."

Anything done with faith, even an offering of flower, a single utterance of the name of God, a little giving of charity

yields magnificent result. Where deceitful reasoning is turned hatefully against straightforwardness, faith cannot abide. A man without faith gains nothing in spite of all his efforts.

A straightforward man may appear to be cheated in the eye of men of worldly wisdom, but he is never cheated in respect of anything, however much he may appear to be so. In this kingdom of the supremely just and compassionate Lord, only the cheat really gets cheated. The straightforward man, who appears to be cheated, always gains. For the Almighty Lord Himself carries the burden of securing and maintaining whatever the artless devotee requires. Thus even when he loses all, he gets in return such an incomparable thing to which the most precious things and possessions of this world can stand in no comparison.

In the *Gītā* the Lord has declared straightforwardness as a distinct part of the divine characteristic. The body, mind, speech, all these three should be straight. There should be no pompousness or haughtiness in one's movement. A haughty or crooked gait indicates a man of conceit. The mind should entertain no feeling of hypocrisy or wickedness. The speech must be free from all deception and artifice. The very face should bring out the sweetness and artlessness of character which captivates the heart. How sweet and fascinating is the face of a child, and its wonderful smile! Even the wickedness of a child, inasmuch as it is straightforward, does not appear to be unpleasant. Similarly, a man, who is straightforward at heart, straightforward in speech and straight in gait, brings happiness to all. He is never arrogant, and is always very dear to God.

(*To be continued*)

The Doctrines of the Six Places or Centres

By K. C. VARDACHARI, M. A., PH. D.

I

The mystic number six is found to recur constantly in Indian philosophical or rather psychological speculation. It is important to remember that the *ṣaṭ-sthala*-doctrine is peculiar to Viraśaiva thought—a 14th century product of Karanātaka and Āndhraadeśa. It is however merely hinted at and it appears as it were in two different versions in the two branches of Viraśaiva-Ārādhya system. These are treated to be the planes or stages in the practiser's path, and might be considered to be the six ways of contactual relation—*yoga*—between the individual soul and Brahma. The main doctrine of *ṣaṭ-sthala* is expressed by the Śrikarabhbāṣya thus: *śravaṇa-manana-viśiṣṭajñānānugata nidi-dhyāsanāt ṣaṭsthala-paramaśiva-sākṣat-kāre tādātmyaparamkaraṇam nirdiṣyate*. Thus the six places or rather planes of contact with the Divine in progressive realization of the Divine (*tādātmya*) are hearing, thinking, knowing as qualified, meditation, contemplation and final fixed existence (*āsana*). Here we will find that the first four are the preliminary conditions of preparation for the understanding of or investigation into the nature of Brahma (*brahma-jīvajnāna*) according to Śrī Śankara. The third (*viśiṣṭa-jñāna*) itself is a result of the first and the fourth (*nididhyāsana*). *Āsana* is equivalent to Samādhi (*sthita-prajñatwa*) of the Yogis. It is the one-pointedness of mind and body and all being in the Lord. It is the most

pleasant state, *sukha sthira* of the Pātañjala-doctrine. Dhyāna is included in this state. Thus the *ṣaṭ-sthala* mentioned by Śripati is clearly a statement of the preparatory conditions which lead to the transformation of man into the Divine nature through being constantly fed and stimulated by the Divine. The worm of the Jiva becomes thus the butterfly of Brahma.

The correlated doctrine of *ṣaṭ-lingas* of Paramaśiva whose *sthalas* these become, are the stages of *ātma-bhāva*, *jyotiḥ-prāṇa-upāsana* and *dhyāna*. In other words, contemplation of *śravaṇa* is *ātma*-stimulation, the state of thinkings is the state of feeling-stimulation. The state of *viśiṣṭa-jñāna* is the state of illumination stimulation, the state of *nididhyāsana* is the state of vital-power-stimulation, the state of *dhyāna* is the state of utter consecrated meditation, and the state of *āsana* is the state of *dhyāna*. As will be seen the correlation here is not clear between Śiva and the states of the individual Jīva.

It would be wrong to say that the doctrine is simple and that it does not mean much more than what meets the eye. It is a dynamic way shown towards the attainment of the divine life and status. The *ṣaṭsthala*s have their parallel in the minor Upanisads which deal with the levels of consciousness and spiritual centres.

The *ṣaṭ-sthala-nirūpaṇa* according to another version is different. The

sthalas are so far as the individual is concerned bhakta-maheśwara-prasāda prāpa-śaraṇa and aikya, and there are said to be corresponding linga-sthalas and these are counted to be with all their minor divisions to consist of fifty.

The analysis of the bhakta-sthala gives us the conditions or stages of attainment of the devotion of the Divine Lord. These are fifteen states *pīṇḍa-pīṇḍavijñāna-saṁsāraheyatā-gurukārunya-linga dhūrāya-vibhūtidhāraṇa-rudrākṣadhāraṇa-pāñchākṣara bhakti-kriyā-ubhayapūjā jangama-pūjā-prasāda-srīkṛta-sopādhidāna-nirupā-dhikadāna-sahajadāna*. It will be seen that all these are merely activities that can be classed with Yama and Niyama of the Pātañjaladarśana—the adaptation of behaviour to the object of devotion. By a constant practice of virtue, one becomes more and more adapted to the mystical goal. Here the wearing of marks, the utterance of the mystical five-letters are sectarian clearly and have no other purpose but to reveal the utter devotion of the individual to his Object of devotion by even openly proclaiming the surrender. That an open declaration has a social value and also an individual value cannot be stressed over much. It is a frank deterrent against any sliding back. In religious practices as in social life one would be afraid of denouncing or renouncing the creed that one has accepted from house-tops.

The second sthala—the *maheśvara-sthala* is the state of devotion coupled with renunciation. The renouncing mentality is already forestalled in the Dāna that becomes natural and universal—

sahaja—unlimited by any limitation. It is also the state of sthira-viveka. The nine stages in this are *maheśwaraprasamā-linganiṣṭa-pūrvāśramanirāsana-sarvādvaitanirāsana-advanavarjana-aṣṭamūrtinirāsana-sarvagatanirāsana-viśva-siva* and *bhaktajivatva*. It is a state of one-pointed devotion by forswearing those that are not that, and which are likely to cause the loss of perfect allegiance. The meheśwara sthala thus leads to the appreciation of the true deitiness of the Maheśwara. The destruction of sins is the result of this state.

The third sthala is the *prasāda-sthala*, the state of peace of mind which is a result of the grace of the Guru and the Linga (God). The destruction of the sins having been achieved the stages that are involved in this place are *prasādi-gurumāhātmya-lingamāhātmya-jangamagaurava-bhaktamāhātmya-śaraṇaprasamā-śivaprasādamahimā*. Man here grows in the peace of mind through the grace of the Lord, the giver, and the teacher and the saints and seers and siddhas and enjoyers or devotees of the Lord.

The fourth sthala is the *prāṇalinga-sthala*. The Linga is the Brahma, the Sūpra-Conscient. Its power is prāṇa—the vital force śakti. The soul attains this state by following this Linga thus endowed with power. By consecration having realized peace and grace, there is here the perfect ground on which the power of the Lord can play without distortion. The stages are *prāṇa-linga-prāṇalingar-cana-śivayogasamādhi-linga-nijasthala-angalingasthala*. Man in this state understands the real place of the Power,

its operational centres in the deep samādhi of realization of the Union of the individual self (anga) with its Lord.

The fifth sthala or place immediately follows this state. In the state of the *śaraṇa*, the seer experiences the Divine in every limb of his being. There are three stages here predicated—the giving up of the darkness in every part of being *tāmasavavarjita*, the *nirdeśa* and *śilasam-pādana*.

The sixth sthala is the *aikya*—union or unity. This is said to comprise of three stages—the state of unity—*aikya*, *ākūra* and *ekabhajana*.

The *lingasthānas* corresponding to these are also mentioned. The whole question here is sometimes asked whether the *lingasthānas* are the characteristic points of contact between the Divine and the individual in each state. The correspondence theory here is that for every state of the individual there is the Object's reciprocity.

This means that far from making the Viraśaiva theory a theory like the Kasmirian Saivism which makes the particular states states of Śiva-Śakti, as is also evident from a study of the Tantric system which establishes the *saṭ-sthala* in the *saṭ-chakra-nirūpaṇa*, pointing out that the individual here is not anything other than the particular agent who stimulates the Kuṇḍalinī, who it is that thereafter experiences the Śiva (linga) at each one of the chakras, and which experiences the individual observes and enjoys as a spectator, here in Virasaivism the individual is the aspiring devotee who experiences the Object (the linga) which is not a static

entity but the Actual Responsive, Loving Deity experienced in those particular stages and states and places as such. Thus there is clearly a radical difference between the Śivādvaita of the Kasmirians and of South India, as also between the Tantrics and the Śiva-Viśiṣṭādvaita of the Viraśaivas who, whilst they accept the *saṭ-sthala*, have recognized these to be the states or places or stages, distinct indeed from one another, of the individual, which get their reciprocal Object in the Lord who assumes the respective responsive attitudes.

For instance let us take the liṅga-sthānas of the first Bhaktasthala. They are the teachers of the *dīkṣā*, *śikṣā*, *jñāna*, and then the linga are of *kriyā*, *bhāva* and *jñāna* which come after the *Guru*-aspect, and the stages of one's own nature, of movement and of the Transcendent (*para-sthala*). The state of the teacher, *ravaṇa*, the state of action, feeling and knowing which may compose *manana*, and finally the understanding of the nature of one's own state and that of the path and the Lord's *nididhyāsana*. All these are involved in this first state of the devotee.

Thus clearly one should see that the intention of the correspondence is to show that the object goes with the subject, for every state of the individual seeker the Object of religious consciousness is of the same order and capable of fulfilling the purpose of the order or the state or aspiration of the individual. By thus communing with the Divine, the individual realizes the presence of the Lord in his teacher, in those who follow the same method as himself, in

the mendicants devoted to the Lord, in all finally.

By this theory of *ṣaṭ-sthala*, which is different, as I have pointed out, from that of the Tantrics, with which undoubtedly it can be compared, Vīraśaiva philosophy has definitely ruled out of its philosophy the idea of identity, but has accepted the unity—*ekibhāva* or *aikya*—of the individual and the Divine. The final sixth state also does not promise anything more than perfect attunement, for there is in that state the *sva-para-jñāna* and the most final culmination is the state of *bhāvābhāvalaya*, the mergence of being and non-being. This indeed is the perfect unity wherein experience and non-experience are both annulled in simple ecstasy. This is the final mystic state about which no one can speak with any sense of comprehensibility.

The doctrine of *ṣaṭ-sthala* seems to be the most important and characteristic doctrine of the Vīraśaiva philosophy which has had its fullest growth and expansion in the Āndhra-deśa under Panditaradhyā, Mallikarjuna and others. There is of course no unanimity between the two views of *ṣaṭ-sthala* mentioned above. One takes the stages mentioned by the Upaniṣads of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, *nididhyāsana*, *dhyāna* and *isana*, with the *vijñāna* that is of the individual—*viśiṣṭa-vijñāna*. What exactly this is is nowhere clearly stated. The corresponding lingasthānas do not really show the correspondence between the state of the seeker, the devotee and the Object of His Quest, the *paramapuruṣartha*.

On the other hand, the second version clearly points out the several states of

the individual along with the corresponding attitude or reciprocity of the Divine Lord. For is it not stated in the *Gītā* that the Lord appears to the individual in the form He is worshipped? This principle has been amply utilized to describe the interrelation, a unique and inseparable interrelation between the subject and the Object of meditation and divine unity. This is what makes these experiences continuous and evolutive, and thus transform the nature of man.

The *ṣaṭ-sthalas* of Virasaivism get a further explanation, the third of its kind, in the *Channabasava-purāṇa*.* They are Bhakta, Maheśa, Prasādi, Prāṇalinga, Śaraṇa, and Aikya. These six are the states of mind in the path of fullest experience of the highest Tattva namely Paramaśiva. The explanation of these six states of mind forms interesting psychological evidence as to the ways of contact with the Highest. The Bhakta-state is the state of will and smell and earth, the Maheśa state is a state of austere devotion, of understanding and taste, and water; the Prasādi state is full of quiet devotion of sight, and self-consciousness and fire; the Prāṇalinga state is the state of experience, touch and good sense and air (wind); the Śaraṇa-state is that of devotional ecstasy, of sound and knowledge and ākāśa (ether); the Aikya is full of cordial devotion, harmonious love of superior imagination of the heart and of the supreme Spirit. The mention of the three integral parts of prayer and surrender and worship such as the hand, face and body, as belonging to the

* cf. *Channabasava-Purana*: Rev. G. Wurth. JBRAS. Vol. VIII. No. 24. 1865-66.

subjective, instrumental and the physical body of the individual who offers his entire being to the Linga of each form or material shows the comprehensive nature of the devotional attitude which in so far as it proceeds from one state or plane of worship to another integrates the vision of each and the power of each with the already arrived at state of experience. The peculiarity of the doctrine is that for each sense-organ, which has been now turned inwards, there is a corresponding mental hand and mental face and mental object which all co-operate in bringing about the total experience of the Divine Object's sixfold nature and more. The

sadāyatanas thus whilst useful in ignorance for exteriorized activities are when turned inwards in their transformed direction means of worshipping the object, the linga, significant for man as Āchāra, Guru, Śiva, Chara, Prasāda and the heart, the sixth, has as its object the Mahalinga, the Śiva-chit-śakti. Even the growth of religious consciousness proceeds on the lines of Nivṛtti of matter, the earth and smell while are the first realizations and offerings; the taste and water form the second offerings; the sight and fire or form form the third offerings; the touch and air form the fourth, whilst the fifth offering is of the hearing, sound and Ākāśa.

Life and Larger Life

BY Y. JAGANNATHAM, B. A.

Self-centred and steeped in utter *Jiva's perverted Swadharma* selfishness, we plod our way in this journey of our life, now with sunny smiles on lips, now with tears of sorrow in eyes. This itself is considered on this terrestrial and self-seeking plane as our Swadharma which, in fact, is a mere travesty of our real Swadharma of the shape of service to the Godhead. Our life here is clearly a perverted and topsyturvy affair. But it is our premier duty to regain the Swadharma which is practically lost to us by remoulding our day-to-day life in the light of the teaching of God-men for living up to it even before our mortal coil is cast aside—else we have wasted another precious life of ours.

Men in the common run of life are mere self-seekers. The *Ignorance and Gilā* unsparingly calls them *its phases Asura*, which in euphemistic language means ungodly or non-divine. Their life is mainly grounded in ignorance which is of fourfold gradation as will be referred to presently. This ignorance consists in the entire oblivion of our real Swadharma as service to the Godhead and viewing the current ideal of our material life as our Swadharma. Ostentation or pretentious parade of virtuous acts to invite encomiums and get cheap name is one feature of this ignorance. Pride resulting from exultation at one's own high accomplishments or affluence is another feature. Conceit or arrogance due to an over-

estimation of one's own importance is still another feature. Irascible disposition that causes suffering to others and makes one gloat over such suffering is a further feature of it. Hauteur or overbearing attitude towards saintly men which moves them to righteous anger and invites infallible curses from them is a still further feature.

It is this ignorance in the shape of mind that commits havoc *The ways of the world-minded* on the Jiva-self by placing it in a position reverse to that of detachment from sense-pleasures which naturally ensures the upliftment of the individual soul and the attainment of noble sentiments and spiritual heights. The coachman of wisdom lays not his hands on the reins of mind for curbing the same; and so the chafing steeds of the tenfold sense get unbridled and roam hopelessly at their will. No wonder, then, if the body-chariot capsizes and brings on ruin to its soul-occupant. Hence the world-minded are those who rebel against the laws of God and lead a reckless and wayward life. They do not know what to be engaged in and what to abstain from. They have neither the cleanliness of heart nor of person. Truthful nature and right conduct are foreign to them. They aver that this universe is but an illusory something; it is, according to them, supportless and without a Lord. They question what else is it if it is not the product of the sexual congress of a male and female with lust as its background. Advancing such strange arguments and theories, these small-witted persons resort to

atrocious deeds and hasten thus the dissolution of the universe. Endless efforts at the gratification of their insatiable lust and thirst for power with a view to lord it over the world are their chief functions. They are woefully erratic and always go to the extremes; and, what is worse, they even try to justify their conduct although their wrong course of action is pointed out. Studiously unmindful of the fact that death is hovering over their heads to snatch them away at any moment, they will be hatching all kinds of utopian schemes and plans which are so vast and complicated as to engulf all their life-time and may even lie unfulfilled at the time of their departure from this world. Indulging and revelling in lustful and wicked deeds is the be-all and end-all of their lives. Lust and ire are their twin-jewels. For the gratification of the former, they need wealth, and for its hoarding no surreptitious or clandestine means is too mean for them.

The trend of thoughts with which these worldlings are always *And their thoughts* found to be obsessed is as follows: "These are my gains today; this heart-desire of mine will I achieve in no time. By me has this foe been slain; and others will soon share their fate. I am the overlord. I am the enjoyer. I exist for myself. I work out for my own happiness. I am powerful. My pedigree has no exemplar. I have a great following. Who is there to vie with me in any matter of this world? I am expert at performing sacrifices, in conferring largess and in merry-making also." In this

way prate the ignorance-wrapt persons of the self-seeking type.

This ignorance appears in its different shades in the *Fourfold classes under spell of Maya* following fourfold classes of persons, viz., men of evil deeds, men with perverted understanding, the ignoble men, and men whose knowledge is eclipsed by Māya by their lack of effort at transcending the same. Men of evil deeds are those who lead an unregulated life and who in consequence cannot appraise human values. Non-theistic moralists are men with perverted understanding. Their code of ethics completely eschews God; for to them morality itself is God and there is no need for a Divine Ordainer to guide their moral conduct. Theistic moralists are ignoble men; for although they may owe allegiance to Iśwara, a God temporarily improvised, they are ignoble enough to relegate Him to a subordinate position in their moral code, for they do not need His grace. There are again those who ascribe formlessness to the Absolute Entity of transcendence and who vehemently deny a form to Him who in fact is simultaneously formless and with form, like unto the Sun identified with its own rays, and who meditate on His formless and neuterizing feature; in other words, on the effulgent nature of the Absolute and who are entirely oblivious of the power-wielding and spiritual form of the Absolute Person, of the eternal and spiritual form of the Jīva, of the temporal nature of the relationship of the individual soul with the evanescent

objects of creation and of the kinship obtained between Jīva and Iśwara as that of the servitor to the master. This class of persons has not, by reason of their imperfect understanding, evidently got over Māya in spite of their erudition and proficiency in spiritual topics. In the order stated *supra*, it is easily seen that each class is more merited than the one preceding the same.

But is there no redemption for *Their redemption* these classes? It is generally seen in this world that men of evil deeds do not render service to the Godhead. Some are, however, picked up and saved by the mere grace of God just as Ajāmila by Śrī Nārāyaṇa at the time of his death and sinners like Jagai and Madhai by Lord Sri Chaitanya. Non-theistic moralists, who are men with perverted reasonings, and even men with wicked deeds are, in spite of their confirmed godlessness, at times led to lift up their prayer to God, when they are overwhelmed with disappointments and setbacks in life. These are then known as Ārtas or devotees in distress. Some of the aforesaid non-theists are now and then seen to take to the quest of an Overlord of creation, and when by reason of such a quest or enquiry, they appreciate the purposefulness of serving Him for ensuring correct moral life, they then become Jijñāsus, soul-seeking devotees or those who are in quest of the Universal Self. When the aforesaid theistic moralists, who are ignoble persons, realize their folly of offering an inferior position

to God in their code of morals even after discovering Him and His purposefulness and place Him above ethics as their Dispenser and Ordainer, they then become Arthaṛthis, fortune-seeking devotees or those who court favours from the Lord as discovered by them. When the meditators on the formless Brahma who, as stated already, is the effulgence aspect of the Absolute, and even those that commune with the immanent Iśwara or Paramātmā, who is the subjunctive portion of the Absolute, begin to discover that their knowledge of Brahma and Paramatma falls short of the plenary knowledge of the Absolute and when they seek shelter of Bhagavān, the Absolute Person and His plenary and unalloyed knowledge, their veil of Māya is forthwith rent asunder and becoming Jñānis, devotees with pure knowledge, they see Him face to face and render direct service to Him.

As such we see there is deliverance for all either by one's own ceaseless endeavours or by the grace of God resulting from unreserved self-surrender to Him. As indicated already, it is mostly God's grace that can rescue men of evil deeds, who by their very course of conduct always face the triple door of the infernum, viz., lust, ire and greed, and who are perpetually denied both the luminous path of the knowers of Self and the dark path of those who have done meritorious works during their lives. Theirs is the nether path leading to the sunless worlds as the Śruti would put it, and in error spawning from birth to birth,

they go down the same in an inclined plane, away and away from God, and what can save these flagitiously vile ones except the causeless mercy of the Lord of Love ?

Of the four classes that are thus *Jñani's unique position* saved, it is the Jñāni that has positively entered into larger life though the other classes also have verily steered aright and are in the way of God-realization. For, to the Jñāni, the Lord is the sole and exclusive object of his most passionate love, while to others their love for the Lord is just to use Him as a means to achieve their cherished desires of the world. The Jñāni is therefore rightly designated Mahātma, and his life is an ideal for all that seek to come up to his standard.

We know that Jīva is essentially *virtues of Mahatmas* a spiritual entity and that he feels bound and therefore subject to metempsychosis when for enjoying this world he allies himself with his twofold tabernacle of mind and body. But when once he detaches himself from them, he regains his former state and goes above the danger zone. Unless one finds himself well-settled in the practice of devotion resulting from knowledge which discriminates spirit from matter, there is no regaining of his former self and no possibility of life shaping itself into larger life; and the qualities detailed *infra* which are of divine kind positively help this greatest achievement of human endeavours—

(1) Bestowing gifts on deserving recipients from one's own hard earnings;

(2) Self-restraint; (3) Sacrifice of the shape of selfless service rendered to the Godhead; (4) Sacred study of literature that teaches the eternal function of the soul; (5) Penance which does not eschew the glorification of the Lord; (6) Upright conduct which stresses consistency in thought, word and deed; (7) Non-injury; (8) Truthfulness; (9) Absence of resentment even when pain is inflicted by others; (10) Renunciation of the shape of discarding things that hinder divine knowledge; (11) Serenity resulting from the control of mind and senses; (12) Non-vilification of others; (13) Universal sympathy (14) Absence of relish for sensual enjoyment; (15) Gentleness; (16) Bashfulness at the thought of committing unworthy acts; (17) Withstanding temptation offered by attractive objects; (18) Diffusion of spiritual radiance; (19) Forgiveness of the shape of not taking exception to other's limitations and absence of revengeful attitude towards others; (20) Fortitude or non-swerving from rightful conduct even under the stress of most calamitous difficulties; (21) Cleanliness of heart and person; (22) Non-interference with the ways of others; and (23) Complete absence of self-laudation.

These are, in fact, the virtues of Mahātmās, of those walking in the ways of God. But we have to remember that in the vast creation, it is not possible to pick out one among the high-souled persons, who has not in him even a slight trace of non-divine proclivity, nor one of non-divine type who does not possess even a slight divine tinge. Sage Durvāsā

of irascible temper and emperor Bali with renown for lavishing gifts are examples respectively of the former and latter type. Just as a small addition of pepper powder does not convert milk into pepper decoction, even so although a single non-divine trait is found mixed up with divine accomplishments, the possessor of the latter is no less divine. Similarly, just as a small addition of milk to a cup of tea decoction cannot convert the decoction into milk, even so although a single divine accomplishment got by chance mixed up with a bundle of non-divine attributes, the possessor of the latter is no less non-divine.

Daily life of Mahātmās

It is interesting to note in this connection how the Mahātmās or divine persons acquit themselves in this world. As stated already, Mahātmās possess exclusive love for and devotion to God. With one-pointed devotion they meditate on Him not only in His plenary aspect but in relation to His Cosmic glories also. They even glorify the Name, Form, Attributes and Pastimes of the Lord. With thoughts riveted on God and mind nestled in Him, they find want of satiety even in discoursing on Him or exchanging to each other their respective spiritual experiences gained in the service of the Godhead. Even as house-holders, they resort only to the Yoga of devotion with a view to save themselves from being distracted and polluted by the corrupting influence of mundane desires and they always look up to the Lord alone for guidance and take shelter in Him alone. With the firm conviction that Bhagavān Himself is the Prime

Cause and Overlord of both the spiritual and mundane spheres, they worship Him and pray to Him alone, now and then losing themselves in Bhāva-trance which sets in as the acme of devotion. Their ceaseless discourses and chantings naturally earn for them blissful life of devotion in the stage of probation as novices in the line and the tasting of the inebriating wine of Divine Love in the stage of God-realization. As they serve Him with unflinching devotion, the Lord Himself ultimately confers on them Divine Love born of their unalloyed devotion to His Lotus-Feet. In this way, they attain to Him and become one with Him.

The secret of this teaching is that the atomic Jiva cannot get at the plenary knowledge of the Absolute merely by reason of his intellectual endeavours and that the same is easily attained when he has unreservedly submitted himself to the grace and mercy of the great Lord. For it so happens that the Lord Himself out of compassion for him provides him with illumination in the shape of ripe and penetrating understanding by placing Himself amidst his mind-workings as the sole Object of his meditation and adoration. This, of course, naturally ends in the dispelling of the gloom born of ignorance pervading the heart of a Jiva ever since he had a fall. This we should not fail to remember.

Qualifications for larger life

It is now clear that Mahatmas endowed with the aforesaid divine qualities are fully established in the performance of their Swadharma. And we have already seen that no person of the

common run can become a Mahatma unless he remoulds his life and qualifies himself for larger life in the light of the teachings of Godmen. The Sadhana for him lies mainly in the ruthless regulation of food and strict discipline of body, mind and speech as so well detailed in the *Gitā*.

Control of palate

The Sadhaka should, at the very outset, try to control his palate. We should always bear in mind that next to the mind, the palate is very hard to curb. Even the Śruti declares that from pure food, mind becomes pure and from pure mind emanates continued memory of Ātmā. Food which is bitter, sour, oversalted, steaming-hot and pungent should be abstained from as also food which produces excessive thirst or burning sensation. Such foods bring about pain, mental restlessness and a score of other bodily ailments. Besides, food standing overnight, which has lost its natural flavour, which is stinking or decomposed into a different taste, which is impure, such as meat and liquor, and which is of the shape of leavings, should be scrupulously avoided. As for leavings, it may be noted that they are not condemned wholesale. It was stated that leavings of spiritual preceptors, holy men and privileged persons like father, husband and the like should be honoured as a matter of great favour, Mahā-prasāda.

The practicant is enjoined to take tasteful and juicy foodstuffs such as fresh and green vegetables; fruits such as mango, jack and the like; foodstuffs which are cordial, easily digestible, assimilating and enduring. Such food-

stuffs promote longevity, mental clarity, strength, well-being, comfort and satisfaction.

The Sadhaka should remember that he should wish well of all beings in creation. Service to humanity should be his watchword. But such service should not be rendered for financial reasons or for the sake of honour. He should lead a life of utter selflessness and renunciation which naturally culminates in and constitutes what is known as Sattvic sacrifice. In a word, his daily life should be one of endless sacrifices.

Service and discipline
Besides, he should worship Mahatmās or men of God, Divine Masters and those who are adepts in spiritual wisdom. He should keep his body clean and observe rectitude, celibacy and non-injury. This is to him what is known as discipline of the body.

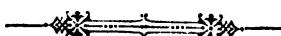
He should not offend others. He should always use truthful, pleasing, soft and comforting language. He should read only such literature which is known to deal with the eternal Swadharma of the human soul. This is to him what is known as the discipline of speech.

He should maintain good temper and find delight in the happiness of others. He should be very sparing of speech and practise self-control, purity of purpose and thought. This is to him

what is known as the discipline of the mind. The Sadhaka who successfully practises this threefold discipline very soon becomes marvellously pure in thought, word and deed.

Fellowship of Jivas
Again, he should remember that the Jiva-self that got enmeshed in the beginningless negligence of Karma is one and indivisible though appearing as diverse; that the same is drawing unto itself Karmic bodies fashioned into shapes such as Deva, man and the like, and that it is eternal though placed among fleeting things of this world. He should remember, besides, that in spite of their distinctive position as wearers of different bodies, fellowship is established among all Jīvas by reason of their being emanations from the self-same secondless Iśwara. Knowing that action is inherent in the embodied self, he should perform it to keep his body and soul together for the service of the Overlord. But he should neither feel attraction nor repulsion nor care a fig for its result.

When the practicant earnestly takes to the mode of life delineated above, he finds himself very soon at the portals of larger life and when the divine qualities stated elsewhere are practised with assiduity, he has verily become a Mahatmā, a power in this world, with all the amenities and privileges of full-fledged larger life.



Appayacharya

BY K. VISWANATHAN

India has been a land of sages, saints and philosophers. It is a land of sages and saints, and I venture to think that it will be a land of sages and saints. At all times and in all climes there have been sages and saints; and even today there are many saints in India, whose thoughts mould the destinies of many in the land. Appayacharya, a life-sketch of whom I am attempting in this, has been one such. He is not so well-known as he deserves to be.

Appayacharya hails from the extreme south of India. He was born in a district which is included in what may be called the Pandya kingdom of olden days. He was the seventh descendant of Nilakantha Dikṣita, the well-known author of "Ānanda-Sāgara-Stava" or "Hymn of the Ocean of Bliss" and other equally great works. A life-sketch of this famous writer is given in Part XI of the *Kāvya-mālā* series published by the Nirnaya Sagar Press. This Nilakantha Diksita was the son of the younger brother to the great Appaya Dikṣita, who was the reputed author of 104 works, the Guru of Bhattoji Dikṣita, and a contemporary of Jagannatha Pandita, the author of *Gangālaharī* and other poems. This great Appaya Dikṣita is known to many students of Hindu philosophy, and was held in great esteem by the then king of Vijayanagara. Appayacharya of this sketch was the descendant of the famous Appayacharya, the author of *Kuvalayānanda*, the premier work on *Alankāra-Śastra*, which

is yet unsurpassed, second only to *Kāvyaprakāśa* or *Chandrāloka*. The Appayacharya of this sketch was a God-intoxicated Brahman. He did not care for worldly things.

Forty-five years of his life were spent in concentrated meditations; he taught a select number of disciples during this time and wrote valuable religious and philosophic treatises. He was severally known as Appaya Śiva, Appaya Dikṣita, Appaya Dikṣitācharya and Akhandaikarasananda. The name he got in his fourth stage of life or Sannyāsa was Appayacharya. On his birth he was named Subrahmanyā. He was born in the Tamil month of Avani 1010 M. E., which corresponds to the English August-September of 1835 A. D. as the son of a Brahman householder named Kottayattu Subbaiyar. This Subbaiyar was a native of Pattamadai in the Tinnevelly district of the Madras Presidency and was called Kottayattu (fort-house) evidently because he had a house in or near the fort.

From the age of discretion this philosopher-saint began to lead the typical Brahman life of poverty and depended on *Uñchha-Vṛtti*. He voluntarily gave up his patrimony. For those not knowing Tamil I may give an idea of what is meant by Uñchha-Vṛtti. This is a sort of begging, dignified and voluntarily taken, wherein the beggar does not stop at any house but simply passes through the streets, repeating the hymns on God

and other verses, with a bowl, and accepts anything that is spontaneously offered by the inmates of the house and goes on after blessing them. A man who takes to such a life is supposed to have no desire for worldly possessions and have a firm faith in the charity of others and the mercy of God. At the present time there are very few Brahmans in India who are leading such pious and pure lives. The Uñíchha-Vṛtta (one who has taken to Uñíchha-Vṛtti) does not know where his next meal comes from and he does not care to know; such is his faith in an All-Merciful Providence.

He got his divine illumination when he was twenty-four years of age and Cosmic Consciousness dawned upon pure mind in his twenty-eighth year. Among others an excellent cajan manuscript closely written by this author in Grantha character is preserved in the Adyar Library, the repository of many manuscripts in South India. His son Subrahmanya Dikṣit asserted that he (Appayacharya) wrote this and several other works during nights after he came out of his Samādhi. I cannot stop to discuss Samādhis here, but may state that Samādhi is a state of concentration, meditation or trance, wherein the individual has no cognizance of the outside world, but is absorbed internally on his subject. There are various kinds of Samādhis, which, I think, can better be treated in another article. There are sufficient proofs to show that he was a

highly illumined and inspired sage and he was unostentatious and orthodox. He was very bold, eclectic, and had broad religious and philosophic views. He has written an autobiography in Sanskrit. From this we find that he was a friend and admirer of the famous adept Yogi called Ganeśa or Tailinga Swami of Benares. It is said that Appayacharya, Ganesa Swami and Sundara Swami were the disciples of one and the same Guru. Tailinga Swami was a Sannyāsi and Sundara Swami founded Kumba Abhishekam, whereas Appayacharya was a supporter of the house-holder's life.

More than once (it is asserted to be thrice) he went to Benares, the Jerusalem and Mecca of the Hindus, on foot and perhaps then he enjoyed the friendship of the adept Yogi. This Tailinga Swami had great powers. He was once worried by his disciples over something and he jumped into the Ganges and remained at the bottom of the river for six months (may be less) when his disciples caught him like a fish in a net. The current in the Ganges is not on the surface but always at the bottom and if a man could remain like a stone there for some months, one can imagine his powers. During his pilgrimages Appayacharya was also seeking disciples. When he was making his religious tours in South India, he was honoured by the then Maharaja of Mysore, the then Sringeri Swami, other ruling chiefs, nobles and government officials.

(To be continued)

Golden Chains

BY REV. ARTHUR E. MASSY

"For so the whole round world is
every way
Bound by golden chains to the feet
of God."
—Tennyson.

There is a vast difference between the peace of man and the peace of God. The former at its best is but an imperfect symbol of the latter which "passeth all understanding". Nevertheless it can be realized.

As calm as the astronomer's "centre of rest" that rests in absolute quiet, while worlds are whirling on without a pause through epochs of storm and calm, heat-fusing ages and glacial periods, in calm and rest, in quietude and perfect peace, peace in war, peace in defeat, peace amidst the dissonance, contradictions and contentions, peace amidst the quibbles, dissensions and disputations of life, we may have calm rest because we are "Bound by golden chains to the feet of God". These words are as suns flashing the burnished light of a dazzling diademed hope radiating with an awfully solemn splendour on the world's dark night. Here we have suns, firmamented in the mental dome that canopies the immortal soul. These great Jewel-suns are from the world's great Jewel-case, from which Shakespeare filched to coronet and crown his creations with immortal splendour but made it none the poorer by his abstractings.

"The whole round world in every
way
' Bound by golden chains to the feet
of God ?'

This is the greatest of truths! So swing on thy wheeling course and mark thy flashing progress, swirling through the ages, epochs, centuries, bearing on thy bosom race after race, evolution after evolution of human dynasties. On through the dark of the starless night, on through the howling blast of the tempest, on through the burning lava and formative eruptions, on through the flood age and the ice age, and the plague age, and the war age, and the drink age and the greed age—we stand upon the world's hurricane deck, where man from all the centuries have stood before, without a tremor or doubt, for are we not: "Bound by golden chains to the feet of God"? These words breathe the perfume of far-off lands; not of India or Arabia, but they come like a swift waft from other climes than that our sun shines upon, from flowers of immortal bloom; on spirit wings there steals along a balm of subtle potentiality over the morning, the meridian and sunset of our lives of oft-tried lives, that gives contentment, resignation, and that peace which passeth all understanding.

"Bound by golden chains to the feet
of God."

As we look at these words, their beauty increases, there is a rare loveliness in the spirit they breathe; as we sit beside them in wondering admiration we put out hands and touch them, we stroke and fondle them with loving caresses, and as we do they turn into shadows, appearances, objects of tone

and colour, size and shape, forming pictures, groups and harmonies, all beautiful to behold, lovely lights, and peace-giving, quickening shades. Spirits of colour and perfume steal in upon us and surround us, wooing and winning us with their entwining arms, their warm kisses, their loving embraces. We see with our inner spirit-sense, spirit hands binding us with links of love and wedding us with rings of love, girdles and chains:

"Golden chains to the feet of God.."

Golden chains! links and rings of love! Rings that wed us, chains that bind us and unite our destinies to One Whose name is Love. Is there any cause to fear that God will unmoor His world, or any portion of it and send it adrift into the storm oblivious of its existence? Is there any fear of these golden chains snapping, these links breaking, neath the stress of the world's storms —chains, links and rings forged on the anvil of omnipotent power? Listen,

we only ask the question; as it may be a subject for disputation, we make no assertion of impertinent authority; we listen for a reply, listen to the whisperings of all that is highest and holiest in our nature, the intuitive lessons of that spirit which we and all mankind have inherited since God breathed into man the breath of life and made of him a living soul, and the question is: Can one infinitesimal shred of the Great God's dominion, *man*, one particle of human kind get outside the loving links and holy rings of God's loving bondage? And so:

"We trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of
blood;
That nothing walks with aimless
feet;
That not one life shall be des-
troyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile com-
plete."

"Hatred is met with hatred, passion with passion, strife with strife. The man who kills is himself killed; the thief who lives by depriving others is himself deprived; the beast that preys on others is hunted and killed; the accuser is accused, the condemner is condemned, the denouncer is persecuted."

—James Allen.



The Balance Sheet*

BY JAYENDRARAY BHAGWANLAL DURKAL, M.A.

I have been curiously noting how the ancient cultural practices of India are shining all the better in the light of reason and practice as more and more points of view and information are coming before us. I remember how in our early days there was a tirade of condemnation of Hindu Religion and Philosophy till the European scholars and savants found to their amazement that the Hindu social system was the most tenacious and long-lived in the world-history and the French and German thinkers found in Indian Philosophy the 'solace of their life' and the 'solace of their death'. The modern European civilization has in the meanwhile begun to crack like a house of cards. Madame Blavatsky of Russia and Colonel Olcott of America have based a whole system of theosophy and philosophy on the Indian system of 'Yoga' and the 'Upaniṣads' and the great teachings and personalities of Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Prof. Radhakrishnan and Gandhiji have made the name of India and Indian culture respectable throughout the world. India, its culture and its philosophy, though not practically believed in, have become more respected today both on account of their inherent value as well as on account of the multiplied experiences and blood-baths, that Europe has undergone during the

last hundred and fifty years. In fact years and events have shown that the balance of reason is on the side of India. More correctly speaking it is not simply in favour of India, but in favour of the *wisdom and light of humanity* that India has duly conserved.

Let us take the principal things with which mankind is concerned, one by one in turn. Let us first take up Chronology. Old European thought regarded the Universe and mankind about six thousand years old. The Indian Chronology according to the sacred texts of the Purāṇas runs into millions of years—the last cycle having commenced about three and a half million years ago. The geologists as well as the biologists and physicists agree now in setting down the origin of the Universe and of Man to figures ranging to millions, thus vindicating the position of Indian chronological beliefs.

It may be mentioned here in passing that the light that we in India have received was based mainly on 'Yogic' perceptions. The R̄ṣis in their 'Yogic' trances saw the whole Truth as in a vision and they translated it unto the human race. Thus we have had with us the Light Divine in all its purity, totality and multisidedness. Hence to those who have faith in it we need not presume to show that

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the balance of reason is on our side. It is only just as a tip to the protagonists of rationalism and modernism that we lay down these points for consideration.

Now let us take up the beliefs regarding space and sound. The Europeans used to believe that sound was limited to hearing and that it perished after a while. The Hindus have regarded sound as the very origin of the Universe and imperishable. The modern scientific research and the discovery of the wireless telegraphy and radio show that the balance of reason is in our favour. Sound pervades all space; only we need the instruments to receive it. It leaves symbols on all substances. We only need the instruments and the ability to detect them.

Next let us take up the question of human enlightenment. It is but natural that the divine creator when he created man with the desire for knowledge gave also the light by which that thirst for knowledge would be satisfied. The possible vehicle of that light could either be a manifestation of his Divinity or a human being enlightened by his light. Now it cannot be that God should reserve His light and wisdom till after hundreds and thousands of years of human history had come and gone. And further that light would not be confined in its source merely to an individual. So it is that the 'Vedas' were revealed unto several Rsis in the very dawn of history and contained knowledge of philosophy which could hardly have been discovered by the imaginary ape-man of science.

Now let us take up language. Sanskrit is by common consent the most

perfect and the most systematic of all languages. It is, as scholars have been led to believe, the most ancient of languages, and the base of numerous later languages of the world. In its power of expression and in the value of its literature it stands unique amongst the languages of world, and in its phonetic correctness and systematic exactitude there is no language to beat it. Thus our Sanskrit language entitles us to have precedence in the very instrument by which human thought and human history proceeds and leads us to the position that the earlier mankind was more enlightened than the moderner.

Then let us take up the sphere of Science. Here, Aryans, the common ancestors of humanity, have shown double-sided acumen. The modern scientist achieves his objects or ends by means of physical instruments. The ancients used to achieve all these things by developing psychic power. There was a double advantage in the choice of instruments. The physical instruments can be used and mastered by anybody good, bad or indifferent. The psychic process involved no such trouble and was the more efficient. But its paramount advantage was that it could not be mastered but by austerity and self-discipline. Knowledge attained in that way was not a saleable commodity and was less liable to be misused than it is in modern times. The Rsis developed the various powers of minimizing, enlarging, and transforming their bodies. They also mastered supernatural arts of clairvoyance, and vision of the past and the future. It is this which accounts for the perfection of the Hindu Sacred

Books. In fact, they did attend to science but in a way that could make science least obnoxious to the human race. It is not impossible that mankind has passed through epochs during which it accepted the more physical methods of science and later threw them off as leaving a balance of mischief almost irreparable.

As regards the more popular sciences of Mathematics, Astrology, and Medicine, it is well-known that they were first developed in India and went to Europe after passing through Arabia and Greece. In Geometry, I was told by a good authority that Euclid's arrangement and treatment of propositions are far behind those of the classic mathematicians of India. As regards Medicine the fore-thought and fore-sight of the Indians were remarkable in the same manner as in science and the art of warfare. In all these the emphasis was laid on the quality of the disciple. They took care of the learner and the learning took care of itself. The art of medicine was not to be taught to anybody and everybody *en masse*. The future physician was primarily to be a *good man* possessed of those qualities which would make his art a boon and a blessing to man. There is no denying the fact that Hospitals and Laboratories have increased; but the money-thirsty doctors have become a terror to mankind. There is a complaint that diseases, infirmities and insanity have increased *pari passu* with doctors, who are ever on the look out for new ways of exploiting men. The old physician, injections and operations apart, hardly kept the ordinary medicines in his dispensary which was his home. He

prescribed and the patient got the drugs from the grocer for a pice or two. The Indian medical system had not only the quality of cheapness but the quality of more efficiency and greater safety. The modern doctors have the knack of getting a case more complicated than cured. Wide readers must be aware also of the attacks of the Homeopathic and other systems on the prevailing system and we may leave them to settle their accounts themselves. In case of Astrology rationalists for a time pretended to disbelieve in anything of the kind, but they have been set at naught, more recently, by exact prophecies which came true and by numerous businessmen who make money on its calculations. There has been a growing tendency even amongst scientific men to believe in the influences of the planets and the stars on human beings as well as on the world. The pose of disregarding a thing because it is imperceptible to the present sensuous apparatus is the pose of an intellectual knave rather than a seeker of Truth.

Such intellectual knavery has exhibited itself and been smashed to pieces also in another field, viz., Theosophy and Philosophy. The materialistic theory set down the whole Universe including Life itself as but a development of Matter. The ancients of the human race told us that God alone was true, that all life is his manifestation and that this material universe was but a passing phantasmagoria. The Science today has taken a round and arrived at the opposite end of the pole from which it started. The whole Universe is full of life. There are no dead atoms in

reality but electrons connoting pure vitality. As Sir James Jeans has accentuated the idealistic nature of the vision of the universe, Sir Oliver Lodge, on the other hand, has made experiment and inquiries which tend to prove the existence of the Soul after death. Modern Science which is in one sense the child of Materialism and in another way the father of Materialism has itself turned grey and is wondering at its ignorance and incompetence.

In intellectual perspicuity, I think, modern Europe is pitifully below the mark. I need not refer either to the great philosophy and intellectual acquisitions of India or to those of Europe's early Greek and Roman civilization. I am thinking of matters more at hand. It is a wonder how the thinkers and the intellectuals of Europe, not to speak of the common people, have swallowed the blatant humbugs of Liberty and Equality of men. "Man was born free," said the man who did not know what he was saying either in its literal or in its metaphorical sense. Man like all objects of nature is bound up on all sides by physical, mental, moral and spiritual conditions. He is bound by his past and bound by his present and if science can say one thing positively more than the other, it says in the spirit of scientific determinism that he is bound by conditions all around; and yet the intellectual fondly believes without reference to his reason that man is free, and if not, he should be made free and pretends to believe that he was put in chains by his own society. Then, again, all men are unequal in their original potentialities and acquired powers, in their moral and intellectual capacities and

also in their spiritual and historic antecedents and outfit. This fact is so patent that nobody can gainsay it; and it is equally amenable to reason that men must be treated with a view to what they are than as equals without discretion. In fact, to take and treat them as equals would mean reducing human affairs to laughable absurdities. The idea of equality has already launched Communist Russia into perpetrating the tyrannies of levelization, and sovietization. But men are so unequal that in spite of the initial injustice of plundering the rich the natural inequality again raises up its head and asserts itself even there. Of course we leave aside the particular historical truth that under such rule the government has become a welter of cruelties and atrocities till now unknown in history. Not only liberty and equality are falsehoods but a push towards them is against the rule and line of Nature. It puts society in the wrong hands, it puts man on the wrong track. It has replaced faithful Christian Civilization by distrustful though scientifically advanced Barbarism in Europe within a couple of hundred years. In fact, the highest reason teaches us primarily not to believe in human reason which is fallible, changeable and weak. The rationalists, strangely enough, have discarded this fundamental teaching of the experience of man's reason throughout history. The older folk were really cleverer in following the reason of God and His prophets than the moderner who has managed to make himself so miserable within a couple of hundred years of his own regime. Not to realize such patent facts as the inequality and handicaps of

individuals and society in the flood of passion and emotion betrays an intellect at its lowest ebb in spite of all pretence to the contrary. Nor is it in politics that modern Europe can claim superiority over the ancients. For, taking the balance-sheet of European politics what do we find ? It tomtomed Democracy and Democracy has fled from many of the European states; either monarchy has continued and reasserted itself or there have been ruinous revolutions followed by absolute dictatorships. The political condition of Europe has been definitely more uneasy and more unsafe. The people have been burdened with more taxes and saddled with extravagant systems of government. Europe is riddled with more quarrels and more cruel and ruinous wars. The money that it draws from other parts of the world is transformed into shot and shell. The ship money which the English resisted and fought over was not a thousandth part of the moneys the democracies swallow unperturbed. The statue of Charles I calmly looks upon the condition around, and the statue of Liberty grimly looks at the people who believe more in stone than in spirit.

Lastly, let us see whether the home has been made happier or more harmonious by the teachings of modern rebellion against ancient institutions and time-honoured values. The answer comes readily from the Divorce Courts as well as from the courtings before divorce. The 'other man' and the 'other woman' have become by-words and code-words of refined society. Sexual morality is at a very low ebb, and the public mentality is mirrored notoriously enough in the

realistic fiction of the age and is glaringly indexed by the cry against the institution of marriage itself. There has been a fashion of remaining unmarried or resorting to questionable kinds of companionship and ruses of communism. Does the reduction of the home to this condition, and the morals of society to such a pass, in a Europe, where chastity was the greatest jewel of life, exhibit greater wisdom, greater comfort, or greater relief ? On which side lies the balance of common sense and reason ? Europe may carry on the show but the consequences are coming with a vengeance.

There is but one thing on which the moderner can pride himself. He can say, "Lo in spite of whatever you say against us, Moderns, and we know some of our woes and weaknesses, we have at least gathered a mass of wealth which is the envy of the world, and with that wealth we can buy everything." Yes, you can buy so many things with the wealth that you have amassed. You can indeed buy things which are valuable. But there are things in this world which are invaluable. Peace of Mind and Peace of Nations; Purity of Love and Nobility of Faith and above all a better Life after Death—things which cannot be purchased by money and without which life is a barren desert, in which man may run to and fro in search of an oasis to quench the thirst of his intellect and the thirst of his Soul. For this, as some of the great Christian thinkers like Dr. Inge, Chesterton and the Pope have said, Europe must turn to Religion, which in its turn is but a part of the Conservative Assets of the human race.

The Perfect Man

BY HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH

It is not an easy thing to appraise a perfect man at his true value. Most persons have strange notions about him. Our view as to how he should behave is pre-formed by reading books, or by imagination or by ideas current in society.

To many of us a perfect man should reduce his necessities to the barest minimum. He must have intense sympathy for the poor. He must not concern himself with his own individual salvation but must feel and work for humanity. With such firmly-fixed pre-conceived standards of judgment we approach saints and fail to understand them.

Some others think that he should speak as little as possible; and must have a calm, serene appearance, etc. If, instead, he is found laughing with hilarity, busily engaged in some "mundane" work and interested in "worldly matters", then, alas, however great he may be he is not a real sage. At the most he is a powerful man endowed with great ability and intelligence and many ordinary virtues but still a man moving on a "lower plane"—a man moved not by his inner self, but by vital and mental forces.

But there is no such visible label on the head of a perfect man to make it easy for us to single him out from others. The popular story of a Jewel being given different values by the vegetable-seller, by the cloth merchant

and by the jeweller is applicable here in the matter of the appreciation of a perfect man. In fact, nothing extraordinarily great in any sphere can be properly adjudged except by those who have specialized in the matter. Einstein's theory, they say, is even now thoroughly understood by persons who could be counted on one's fingers. In the same way, the perfect man is recognized as such only by those who have an eye to see and a heart to appreciate him.

What, therefore, follows is certainly not the last word on the subject. It is quite likely to have glaring defects. But an humble attempt is here made to show what a perfect man is. What has been gathered here is partly by contact with high souls, partly by reading with the one object of getting into the heart of the matter and partly by cogitation which refused to be dazzled by personalities however eminent and by determined firmness not to be blown away by wind-currents and cross-currents of powerful ideas. As long as one is possessed by dogmatic views as to what a perfect man should be, it is impossible for him to find out the jewel which often lies hidden. A relentless and unbiased search for Truth is necessary for the discovery of a perfect man.

This is so because one must not forget the central all-important fact that a perfect man is one who is perfect not in any visible, gross sphere, but in the

subtle, invisible sphere of the mind or spirit.

This is all the more so because a perfect man is often almost impenetrable. It is easier to see through the wiles of a villain than through the actions of a saint, inspired as they always are by motives beyond our imagination. We measure them with the foot-rule of our little minds. But though the saint has a human body, that is only a very small part of him; but great and grand is he in his unique experiences. His mind or spirit is as vast as space itself. The actions that spring from it, though commonplace in appearance are really extraordinary.

For instance, he seems to be absolutely unconcerned with things that sorely trouble the "worldly-minded". Even the invasion of a ruthless enemy, the scourge of an epidemic or the ravages of a famine may leave him untouched. It indicates—apparently—that he is heartless.

But really it is not so. He remains unmoved because he sees what others cannot. He knows that things follow their appointed destiny and so he believes in allowing things to take their own course. Then, again, his mere subtle sympathy, though not even expressed, is far more effective than the rush and bustle of the total work of others.

His attitude is like that of a river that finds its own course. He lets himself alone, and, similarly, he lets others evolve according to their nature. Thus he renders the best service, though outwardly he seems to be absolutely inactive.

To him none is intrinsically superior to another. He forgets his own self and ignores all distinction. As there is nothing which he yearns for, he has not to struggle and consequently he has no achievement. His soul being all-expansive, he identifies himself with everything without distinction and thus loses his individuality. The sage, therefore, has no name. He is satisfied with everything and every circumstance or place. So he is always happy. To him changes are but the waves of the Ocean—Eternity. He rides on them. He alone is the fittest to rule a state, because he has no need.

He knows that things spontaneously produce themselves in him. He has no preferences or aversions for different opinions; nay, he has no opinions at all. So he does not disturb any phenomenon and does not oppose different opinions—but just transcends them. He rests in the evolution of nature.

He remains immersed in Being and so is Absolute Knowledge. He does not construct anything and so does not destroy. He lives in direct experience. He simply receives impressions but does not retain them. He neither prejudges nor postjudges experience. He anticipates nothing. The past slips away from him as imperceptibly as time. There is no present also for him. He glides with the flow of Time and so he is Time. Outwardly he has no conscious observations of the world, inwardly no conscious feeling. He enjoys everything and adapts himself everywhere. Life and death have no charms or terrors for him. His mind is vacant; he receives impressions not in the mind but in the

spirit. He is a mere living automaton. Sometimes he uses peaceful methods, sometimes violent, according to the need and condition of the time. He considers the inevitable as the appointment of Destiny and is always at ease. Apparently he is useless to others, but everything is useful to itself by his mere existence. So the perfect man lets everything have its own achievement. There is nothing that seems harmful to him.

He is beyond praise and blame. "Now like a dragon, now like a snake", he changes with Time and has no insistence. He is now high, now low. He is quite at ease with events. He treats events as events and is not treated as an event by them. He is Excellence himself. He lets alone the changes of Time and is not disturbed by them because he senses the Time-Spirit. When he senses, he does not seek reasons. He sees unity in discord. He has got no "I", and, therefore, no interest and so no struggle. He does not allow the operations of Destiny to affect him. He has virtue but looks as if he has none. He is Man but does not appear like one. He makes no plan and so needs no knowledge. He has no deficiency in character and so needs no morality. He has no human affection. He does not seek for heroic accomplishment; so he has no cause to regret failure or be elated with success. He receives with delight anything that comes to him and leaves without consciousness anything that he may have forgotten. He is pure experience and, therefore, true knowledge. He unifies nature and man and equalizes all things in

spirit. To him there is no mutual opposition in all things because he lives in experience. He himself is conquest over all, in all and between all. So he is empty and everything. He is unconscious and is everywhere. He thus mysteriously unifies his own self with its other. He is the totality of qualities, of existences, of the urge of creations, of Matter and Mind, of Time and Space. He is the totality of the spontaneity of nature.

Since things produce themselves spontaneously, he does nothing in a sense. But being the totality of the spontaneity of nature, he does everything in another sense. So he produces by not producing. To him everything is in destruction and so in construction. He has no will of his own separated from all-pervading Blissful Existence. Therefore, he is tranquil in activity.

He does no wrong. He forgets everything in experience. He weeps, he laughs, he cracks jokes, he speaks, he talks, he murmurs and grumbles and does such activities spontaneously in sympathy. Thus he helps the process of evolution in others. He makes excursion in pure simplicity. He identifies himself with non-distinction. He follows the nature of things and has no personal bias. His influence reaches all things by itself and so the things come into their own. At times he appears rigid, at times full of vivacity and activity at times still, at times indifferent. Thus he is the totality of moods and transcends them. So he is active in tranquillity. In fact he is activity, he is tranquillity; he is the balance of tranquillity and activity.

He is not busy with work. He is master of nothing and master of everything. He identifies himself with the Infinite. His mind is like a mirror and so he is able to deal successfully with things but is not affected by them. He senses the wisdom of Time and necessity of circumstances and in that way he allows the world to take care of itself.

Apparently he has no feelings but he is the fountain-spring of feelings, the very source of feelings. The intensity of his feelings is so tremendous that it seems at standstill, just as the top seems still in its tremendous velocity. His love is so all-embracing and extensive and his nerves are so

sensitive and subtle that his love reacts to the slightest ripple anywhere in the world.

He imitates none as imitation does not satisfy the need of the moment. He is an independent unit which can be compared with none but himself. Spontaneous is his skill in managing things without feeling busy and in carrying a heavy burden without feeling the load. Generally he desires nothing, but if ever he desires anything that thing is certain to be concretized in reality.

He knows the equality of things and though there is apparent difference he sees oneness in reality. He is an incomprehensible mystic.

Prayer

By SWAMI RAMA RAMA

In prayer remember that the spiritual body within you is undergoing a process of purification. The little self within you, once thick with ignorance, prejudices and intense passions, becomes clearer and clearer till the Divine light can play on it and pass through it as through clear glass. The little self being itself a ray of the Divine light has to realize its identity with the great source of light. It is a gradual process of realization and not a sudden achievement. You have to strenuously achieve that condition by constant self-purification. The realization of God within yourself comes as a matter of course. So work on till you achieve great results.

The Gāyatrī is a great mantra given by great Rsis to help concentration of the mind on Divine life that illumines the world. The Gāyatrī though it refers to the light illuminating the intellect and the mind refers really to that Sun which permeates the whole

universe with light and life. Hence the inner meaning of the Gāyatrī is invocation to God, who alone is referred to as the "Tat-Savitu". Hence the repetition of the Mantra preceded by the preliminary contemplation on Om helps the mind to concentrate fixedly on God, the Almighty. It is the prayer that carries you step by step from the mere physical utterance to a sudden illumination of the mind and lifts you to a state where you can realize your oneness with God. This communion is finally brought about by a proper and intelligent Japa of the great Gāyatrī. Hence this Japa is the greatest agency ordained for self-purification. Remember that millions of people and spirits are using this Japa for their evolution. It thus becomes a congregational group-prayer. Hence from every point of view, the Gāyatrī is a great gem of prayer.

I say "proper and intelligent Japa". It means understand the meaning of

the prayer, word for word, and then concentrate the mind on each word of the Gayatrī. Mere mechanical repetition of the Mantra produces very little effect. But if each word rouses in your mind the meaning and essence of the same, then you are performing the Japa properly and intelligently.

Understand the meaning of the words correctly. The total meaning is that God is the great Sun who illumines. This meaning should be present in the mind when the Japa is being performed. The detailed aspect of God may be meditated on later in Dhyāna for which also the Gayatrī may be used. At the time of prayer, the mind should dwell on the one great Image of God as the source of all light and illumination. The radiating rays may be split up into many gods and the same may be split up into many worlds and various aspects of creation.

The great mantra of Gayatrī, should be uttered in a state of mental and physical purity. Many souls who have been using the great Japa are doing the same in the heavenly worlds also. Hence there is the total effect of the Japa by millions of souls. The world gets along on its course better by our co-operation by means of these Japas. The Japa not only dispels the darkness of the mind but also the influence of evil spirits and evil influence. The Japa is a great armour against temptations of various kinds. If you remember these you will realize how manifold are the merits of doing the Japa. This Japa will give you the strength and health necessary to impart the same to others. By the help of this Japa you can go through all

the astral and heavenly worlds very safely. This Japa will act as a staff to lean upon in the worst times of grief and calamity. This Japa will open the gates of the spiritual world at the appropriate time and you will realize what the great spirit world and forces are like. This great Japa is like a huge lever with which you can move mountains. Hence know that this Japa will always be the central Japa for all prayers and meditations at the Centre.

Your astral can be made to journey through the astral world. Similarly in deep meditation the mental body can be made to journey through the heavenly world and back. Many of the dangers that beset these astral and mental journeys are warded off by use of the Japa, unless you have a great Guru to help you along these journeys.

When you pray the mind rises up gradually and keeps on at a high level and at the close of the prayer comes down again to the physical surroundings. It describes a gradually ascending curve and then descends.

Remember at the peak of the prayer, the mind is entirely concentrated on "Om" only. It is by gradually increasing the height of the peak that you get a glimpse of the Divine Centre. The mind should not fall again and again to worldly thoughts during the concentration of prayer. When everyday thoughts intrude into the mind, it is time to stop the prayer; nor should the prayer raise the mind to a high peak and then drop it suddenly. Such prayer is weak.

The previous preparation of keeping yourself in peaceful surroundings and

then making the mind calm and peaceful before prayer is the only way. The maintenance of such a condition rests with yourself. After the mind has risen in prayer, there is not much chance of being affected if the preliminary conditions are properly arranged.

One who feels disturbed during congregational prayers may stop without disturbing others who are able to continue. There is absolutely no efficacy in sitting at prayer with distracting thoughts in one's mind. Such thoughts should first be banished and then attempt should be made for a quiet prayer. The prayer is as much in the interest of the individual as of the whole world.

Concentration is the effort made by the mind to single out one idea to the exclusion of others and keep the mind fixed on the single idea so selected. In meditation, the mind is concentrated on a group of connected ideas and does not wander from the group. In prayer, the concentration of mind is on God and the Divine attributes only. In concentration, you can keep your mind fixed on physical objects or mental ideas, not necessarily of a spiritual character. A scientist meditates when he is attempting to solve a great problem. In prayer, the mind is concentrated on and meditates on the Divine Source only.

Prayer is an act of making use of the powers of the mind to get power and strength for good purposes.

Prayer is not measured by the length of time but by its efficacy. The time given to you is too short at present as you are not trained to keep it up even

for fifteen minutes. Gradually as you get trained to the act of prayer, you will increase the time without knowing it. The mind will refuse to come down for a long time from the high altitudes achieved in prayer.

Your prayer is not merely a personal thing with you. It has connection with all people and all spirits. Prayers are substantial creations in the Heaven world. Once prayers are uttered, they travel all over the world through the all-pervading ether. They act upon great receptive minds, besides vibrating the message upto the seat of God, the very centre of the Universe. Remember that the prayer for world peace, being an act of service, will elevate your mind. It is a substantial contribution to world peace. When peace is restored all over the world, you will understand how your humble prayers were also a factor for the same. Therefore, pray for world peace. It is a prayer of the most unselfish kind. Do you know how many spirits are yearning for prayers from their friends? Similarly, can't you understand that the poor soldiers arrayed in battle are yearning for somebody to pray for restoration of peace? All are feeling helpless in the grip of war mentality. Hence you should help with prayer both in your own interest and that of others. But the interest of others should be present in your mind. The prayer should be offered as an act of service.

Practise Rāma Bhajana in all forms. The real Rāma Japa requires that the heart should be kept in a pure and buoyant condition. No other thought should intrude into the mind. At the

time of Rāma Japa the mind should be concentrated on the Almighty Divine life through the help of prayer. The heart is purified in the process and occasional glimpse of the Divine life is vouchsafed to the practicant. Remember that Māya always stands as a screen between the reality and man. To the great Bhakta occasional glimpses of the great Divinity come as steadyng influences. The divine life is a play amidst permanent and unchanging realities. Your finite mind cannot grasp the matter. But a flash of knowledge lights up your mind occasionally and then you begin to know. Rāma Japa is all that and no more. Rāma was the expression of Divine life on earth. When you contemplate on that Divine life you align yourself with real life. Bravely destroying all evil and helping your brother mankind realize the ideal of living service. Rāma helps in many ways. Rāma Japa should be done from the heart.

The ability to keep the mind blank comes from practice. The mind cannot ever remain a blank. The practice is necessary for receiving inspiration from within. To keep the mind blank thoughts of everyday life should be kept out. Selfishness is the bane of spiritual life. Selfishness will prevent spiritual progress. The man who prays for his selfish purposes will never be answered. The selfish man represents the type of person who prays that God Varuṇa should rain and water his garden only. Even in the matter of religion people wish to appropriate God and the Divine

life. The unselfish prayer for the maximum good and happiness of all creatures is the proper prayer moving in response to the evolutionary purpose of the Divine Mind. That will be answered. Every man should pray for the good of all. If you pray for rain, pray so that the rain may fertilize the whole country and the world. Congregational prayer is intended for the same purpose. None can pray in a congregation for selfish ends. The person who goes privately to his God and makes a private request does so with a selfish purpose and thereby degrades the ultimate aim of religion. God should not be approached for worldly purposes or worldly ends.

Concentration is often difficult. Hence look at the tip of the nose and steadily fix the mind on some object. When concentration becomes easy, these devices will be unnecessary. Then the mind will naturally and easily concentrate upon God, the Almighty. Real and true concentration is directed to the spiritual fountain of all knowledge and wisdom. Closing of the eyes from objects of sight and of the ears from external sound or noise will help concentration. These practices bring about a passive state. But when you learn to concentrate properly, these and other physical helps will be unnecessary. The mind will gravitate towards the Supreme without any external help. But in the beginning, use all possible means for getting proper concentration of the mind.



ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANAM KALDARSHAKU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(Bhagavadgītā VI. 30)

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ध्येयं सदा परिमवमभमभीष्टदोहं
तीर्थास्पदं शिवविरच्चिनुतं शरण्यम् ।
भृत्यातिंहं प्रणतपाल भवाब्धियोतं
वन्दे महापुरुष ते चरणारविन्दम् ॥

(Bhāgavata XI. v. 33)

"O Great Puruṣa, the protector of those who seek refuge under You, obeisance to Your lotus-feet, which should be ever contemplated, which remove misfortunes and confer all desired objects, are the support of sacred places, are worshipped by Śiva and Brahma, are ever kind to seekers, remove the distress of devotees and are like unto a boat for crossing the sea of existence."

Dialogue With The Lord During Meditation—I

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

Let the practicant retire to a solitary place and take his seat in a yogic posture like the Swastika, Siddha or the Lotus posture, on a seat made either of the holy Kuśa grass or of wool, keeping his spine erect, and without feeling any inconvenience. Let him then withdraw his senses from their respective objects and renouncing all wordly thoughts make the mind totally void of impressions. Thereafter let him invoke the Lord, the Diety of his heart, in a pure state of mind, free of sloth and full of dispassion. He should know that when the Lord will appear before him during meditation, the mind will be full of joy, peace and light and although his eyes may remain closed he will, as if, see the whole universe lighted up by a supernatural light. Where there is peace there will be no distraction, and where the light of knowledge shines there will be no sleep or sloth. He should firmly believe that when God is invoked and prayers are offered to Him, the Lord appears before the devotee during meditation. There should be no difficulty in meditating on the Form of one's own Diety. The question may be raised that when it is easy to meditate on a Form which one has actually seen, is it ever possible to meditate on a Form which has not been seen? The answer to this is that meditation on a Divine Form is possible by reading the description of a Form in the scriptures or hearing the same from the lips of saints, or selecting a picture of the Deity which appeals to one's heart. There-

fore, the practicant should invoke the Deity by closing his eyes. If such invocation fails to bring the Lord, let him loudly chant His Names and virtues, offer Him prayers and hymns and go on repeating the invocation with full faith and Love in a voice choked with emotion. Full of hope that the Lord will come, and expectant of His arrival, let the devotee chant the hymn—

एक वात मैं पूछतु तोही । कारन कबन विसारेहु भोही ॥

"(O Lord) one word I ask Thee.
Why hast Thou forgotten me."

Let him, then, believe that the Lord has appeared before him, and stands in the air at a distance of about two feet from him. Carefully observing every part of that Divine Form, from feet to head, let him chant—

नाथ सकल साधनकर हीना । कीन्ही कृपा जानि जन दीना ॥

"O Lord, though I am deficient in every form of spiritual discipline, Thou hast shown me Your grace knowing me to be poor in spirit."

'O Lord, I have no spiritual practice to my credit, and yet You have shown me Your favour finding me poor and helpless. I possess nothing on the strength of which I can claim Your vision even in meditation. But You have granted me this vision knowing me to be humble in spirit.'

Thus on the appearance of the Lord during meditation, the practicant will start conversation with Him.

Practicant:—O Lord, why do You take such a long time to appear even at the time of meditation ? Why do You not come the moment You are sought ? Why do You keep one longing for such a length of time.

Lord:—In keeping you longing lies your greatest good.

P:—I do not understand what good lies in the longing. I think good lies only in Your appearance

L:—A special object is gained by the delay in My Appearance. The separation is then intensely felt, and the desire for union is accentuated. Appearance at that state leads to a special kind of joy. When there is intense hunger, food tastes sweet like nectar.

P:—I agree. But if the appearance is put off indefinitely, the practicant, being hopeless, may give up his meditation.

L:—If faith in Me is so weak that delay in My appearance may tire out the practicant and cause him give up meditation, what purpose will be served by My appearing before him ?

P:—Your appearance will increase his taste in You. That will make him intensify his spiritual efforts. Therefore, it seems to me proper that You should appear the moment a practicant calls out for You.

L:—The propriety of a thing is determined by what I Myself consider to be proper, and I do only that which is proper.

P:—O Lord, I should certainly admit whatever You say, but the

mind is exceptionally base. It prevents me from accepting it. What You say is no doubt the truth, and yet I like that you should appear the moment I call You. Please tell me what is the nature of that cry which, when uttered even once, compels You to appear.

L:—I may appear like that when a practicant gets agitated on account of My separation even as the Gopis got agitated, or when he cries out through distress even as Draupadi and Gajendra did with Love and faith in Me. Or, I may appear even unasked before a devotee, who, like Prahlāda, practises devotion without any interested motive.

P:—Why do You appear after making the devotee feel intensely agitated over Your separation ? Why do You make him pass through the agony of separation ?

L:—The agony of separation has a very high place in the realm of spiritual experience. It intensifies Divine Love. The devotee who experiences this agony finds it difficult to live without Me even for a moment. Thus he attains Me for all time. He never loses hold of Me after once realizing Me. Bharata had suffered the agony of separation for fourteen long years, but thereafter he was never separated from Me.

P:—Whenever You required anything to be done, You entrusted either Lakṣmaṇa or Śatrughna to do it, and not Bharata. What was the secret of it ?

L:—Owing to excess of Love, Bharata could not bear separation from Me.

P:—Then, how had he borne it for fourteen years ?

L:—He had to bear it under my order, but this separation intensified his Love so greatly that thereafter he had never to suffer separation from Me.

P:—When ordaining that long separation, what was the special good You intended for Bharata ?

L:—Through the experience of separation for fourteen years, he learnt the true secret of separation and union. Then, he began to feel even a moment's separation as long in duration as that of an age. Without that, how could he develop this intense attraction for Me ?

P:—The pain of separation may develop despair as well in a practicant.

L:—I have already said that it is useless for Me to appear before such a practicant.

P:—Then, what should such a practicant do to gain the privilege of Your sight ?

L:—He should try his utmost to increase Love and Faith in Me.

P:—Is it, then, wholly impossible to gain Your vision without Faith and Love ?

L:—Yes, it is wholly impossible. This is the wisest rule.

P:—Can You not make an exception to this rule ?

L:—If I make an exception in favour of one, and refuse to do it with regard to another, I shall be guilty of partiality of conduct. Exception to the rule cannot be made with regard to all.

P:—Is there any circumstance when this rule is not applied ?

L:—Yes, there is. This rule is not applied when a person departs from this world. At that time mere remembrance of Me, whether with or without Faith and Love, will lead to My realization.

P:—Why is this special exception made with regard to the departing soul ?

L:—His life is then coming to its end. He is leaving the human body for an indefinite period of time. That is why at that moment the rule is specially kept in abeyance with reference to him.

P:—It is quite in the fitness of things that this special exception should be made with regard to the departing soul. But at the time of death control over the mind, intellect and senses are lost; therefore it may not be within the power of man to remember You at that critical moment.

L:—For that purpose the habit of constant remembrance of Me should be formed. He who cultivates this habit will certainly remember Me at the last moment.

P:—I have a desire that I may maintain constant remembrance of You, and I try also to maintain it, but the fickle and wayward mind does not allow me to do so. What should I do under the circumstance ?

L:—Withdraw the mind from every object which may tempt it; argue with it as you would do with a loving friend, and try, again and again, to fix it on Me. Or, knowing Me to be present in every object, meditate on Me in the very object which may tempt it.

P:—I heard this advice from others also, have read about it and understand its efficacy. But I forget it when the mind begins to wander like an unbroken horse. That is why I fail to maintain constant remembrance of You.

L:—You are subject to this bad habit because of your worldly attachments. For removal of these attachments and rectification of the habit you should cultivate association with saints (Satsanga) and practise Japa of the Divine Name.

P:—Both these are done by me to a certain extent, and I recognize their efficacy, but such is my misfortune that I cannot continue them for all the time.

L:—Where lies your misfortune in this? Your failure in these matters shows nothing but deficiency of effort on your part.

P:—O Lord, are the practices of Bhajana and Satsanga subject to effort? I have heard that Satsanga is possible only when there is an accumulation of one's past merits.

L:—When a practicant makes effort for the practice of Bhajana, subordinating himself either to Me or to a saint, it will certainly bring him success. Evil association, worldly attachments and stored up latencies of past Karma no doubt hinder his progress, but these obstacles are removed through the intense practice of Bhajana. Then his progress will be steady and Faith and Love will increase. Obstacles will cease to exist for him. Prārabdha, or the Karma which has begun to bear fruit, brings him only joy or sorrow according to his past Karma. It cannot frustrate

new auspicious deeds. Obstacles appear because of the weakness of the practicant. Apart from past merits, Satsanga may be obtained through My grace even through the effort of a practicant, when it is made with reverence and Love.

P:—O Lord, there are men who try to obtain Satsanga, but when they fail to obtain it, they begin to denounce their fate. Is this proper for them?

L:—Well, there is danger of self-deception in this. It may bring slackness in spiritual effort. If after the best of efforts one fails to obtain Satsanga, there may be some justification for this; but even then instead of blaming the Prārabdha, the proper course should be to blame the deficiencies in reverence and Love, for through reverence and Love new Prārabdha may be created and bring one the most auspicious gift of Satsanga.

P:—O Lord, why do you extol the glory of Satsanga so highly?

L:—Without Satsanga practices like Bhajana, meditation and selfless service are not possible, and exclusive Love for Me cannot be developed. Without its realization of Me is difficult. That is why I extol Satsanga so highly.

P:—O Lord, then tell me what should be done to obtain Satsanga?

L:—I have already told you that when one makes an effort with Faith and Love to obtain Satsanga, he may obtain it through My grace.

P:—Now, I shall make further and more determined effort to obtain Satsanga. From You also I seek help that I may have constant Bhajana and

meditation with a heart full of Love, and without any interested motive.

L:—What You seek is quite right so far as your understanding goes, but your mind does not relish it so well as it does enjoyment of worldly objects.

P:—Yes, Lord, what I seek is from the intellect only, but the mind is a veritable rascal. That is why when it does not relish Bhajana and meditation, I am helpless before it. It is one more reason why You should send me special aid.

L:—If the mind does not relish Bhajana and meditation, even then you should continue to try to fix it in those practices. Gradually it will get the relish, and then proper Bhajana and meditation will be possible.

P:—I have been trying according to my capacity and power, but the result has not yet been quite satisfactory. That is why I feel somewhat disheartened. I have faith that I may succeed through Your grace. That is why I humbly solicit Your grace.

L:—No, You should not lose heart. Everything is possible if the burden is shifted on Me. That is all right, but out of deference to My instruction, you should also put forth your best effort. Never delude yourself into the belief that you have done all that is humanly possible; there is yet a good deal of deficiency in your effort. You have not yet devoted all your strength to it. Therefore, strive and strive with all your heart.

P:—Taking shelter under You, I shall no doubt try again, but, O Lord, success depends only on Your grace.

L:—It is no doubt out of love that you say you depend on Me. But take care that it may not lead you to the error of slackness in effort. I say that you should put more strength into your exertion. When that is my instruction, there is no reason why your exertion should lose its strength. It is only your mind which is playing this deception on you. Never allow the mind to entertain any thought of despair; nourish it always with hope.

P:—When I fail to obtain peace and joy, I begin to lose hope.

L:—When you depend on Me, why do you turn your thought to the success of an effort? That is also a form of desire.

P:—No doubt it is a desire, but its purpose is to advance Bhajana and meditation.

L:—When you have taken refuge in Me, why do you worry for peace and joy so that your Bhajana and meditation may advance? You should devote your attention to carrying out my instruction, and not to the fruit of your effort.

P:—Failure in the effort will bring loss of hope, and loss of hope will interfere with Bhajana and meditation.

L:—That is all right, nevertheless there should be no loss of hope because of a certain amount of failure in effort. With faith in Me, and out of deference to My instruction, one should gradually go on increasing his exertion.

P:—This is quite proper and reasonable, and yet, O Lord, when there is no peace and joy, loss of hope is forced on me.

L:—If such is the case, you do not seem to have heard Me with care and attention. You are subject to a deception by the mind.

P:—O Lord, is this not caused by the stored up impressions of my past sins ? Are they not damping my ardour ?

L:—When one surrenders oneself to Me, his sins are all destroyed.

P:—Yes, Lord, I know this; but where is that complete surrender in my case ? I have been making only a lip profession of surrender to You.

L:—I do not abandon even one who makes a lip profession of surrender to Me. But you should try to the best of your ability to surrender yourself in consonance with the sentiment of your heart.

P:—I try my best, but the vagaries of the mind make me quite helpless.

L:—It is an error on your part to regard that you are trying your best. As a matter of fact you try very little, but regard it as a large effort.

P:—I shall make special attempt to remedy this defect. But owing to fondness for the body, attachment to objects of worldly enjoyment and fickleness of the mind, it appears to me very hard to succeed in the attempt to complete surrender without the help of Your grace.

L:—You regard it hard, therefore it appears hard. As a matter of fact, it is not so hard.

P:—Why should I not regard it hard ? Through practical experience I find it so.

L:—If that is your experience, let it remain so; but you should fix your attention exclusively on my words.

P:—Depending on Your grace I shall try from now that it may not appear difficult to me. But I have heard that all sins get destroyed through even a slight practice of Japa of Your Name and meditation of Your Form. You Yourself and the scriptures say so; then why are my mental impulses so filthy ? However slight and defective they may be, Bhajana and meditation are performed to a certain extent even by me.

L:—It is true that sins get destroyed through the practices of Bhajana and meditation. But who believes in this ? You also do not possess full faith in this, for you yourself regard that your sins are not destroyed, and they remain as they were before.

P:—What is the cause of this lack of faith ?

L:—Association with persons who are vile* and unbelievers,† stored up impressions of sin and evil impulses.

P:—Are sin and evil impulses two different kinds of evil ?

L:—Theft, adultery, falsehood, killing of animals, hypocrisy, etc., are sins; attraction, repulsion, lust, anger, arrogance, egotism, etc. are evil impulses.

* Vile persons are those who indulge in activities prohibited by the scriptures, viz., falsehood, deception, theft, adultery, killing of animals, etc.

† Unbelievers are those who have no faith in God and do not believe in the scriptures like the Srutis, Smritis, etc.

P:—How are they to be destroyed?

L:—The best way of destroying them is to devote oneself disinterestedly to the practices of Bhajana, meditation, selfless service and Satsanga, etc.

P:—Some say that when dispassion is developed, evils like attraction and repulsion get automatically destroyed, and thereafter Bhajana and meditation can be practised in a satisfactory way.

L:—Yes, it is true that dispassion helps to advance Bhajana and medita-

tion. But without purification of the heart dispassion cannot be firmly established. If you say that dispassion may be developed by cultivation of thoughts of sorrow and evil involved in the body and worldly enjoyments, I agree with it. But these thoughts also develop as the result of the practices enunciated above. Therefore, utmost effort should be made for carrying on the practices of Bhajana, meditation, selfless service and Satsanga.

(To be continued)

Unto Bliss

Look what is your condition—the body is diseased, the mind is unsteady and impure, the intellect is unfaithful, life is as good as placed in a hornet's nest, so weeping and complaining you are being gradually carried to your doom.

The breakers of the sea of existence are mercilessly raising their heads and dashing against you. You are confounded, and cannot make out how to save yourself from their hammerings. When you try to come to a solution, that very moment a new wave appears and strikes against you, and carries away your thoughts to where you do not know.

Thus, none can tell for what a length of time you have been diving in the ocean of sorrow—and you do not scan anywhere either any means of escape, or the beginning and end of this ocean.

There lies only one way for you of getting out of this miserable plight. And that way is to surrender yourself entirely to God and shout for Him from the bottom of your heart. The Lord said—"He who fixes his mind on Me, I rescue him very soon from the ocean of existence." Therefore, if you want to save yourself from the fearful waves of

that ocean shout for Him, tell Him—"O Lord, wherever I sought any support to lean upon, I suffered a fall; for I have not yet discovered anybody who is firmly fixed. You alone are firm and fixed; bruised by the bullets of the world and humble in spirit, I seek refuge under you. Please save me from this terrible fear."

Know it for certain, if your seeking is sincere, He will save you without fail. He will not wait to examine who you are, what your status is, what your habits of life are, whether you are virtuous or a sinner,—He will only see whether you have faith in Him and in His grace, and how far your wail is sincere.

Remember: He is the refuge of the helpless, the friend and protector of the poor, the redeemer of the fallen. If you seek Him regarding yourself sincerely as helpless, poor and fallen and wail for His support, He will certainly make you His own, and purifying you take you up in His bosom, even as a mother picks up her child from the dirt, washes it and gives it her caress.

Know it for certain that God can match only Himself as your dearest

object of Love, nearest relative, your very breath, life of your life, the soul of your soul. You are extremely dear to ~~you~~. O friend, do but once wail for

Him from the depth of your heart. You will, then, see how soon you receive in return His incomparable Love.

"Siva"

My Assets All

By Wanderer

When wilt Thou, Lord, be my assets all ?
When wilt Thou enter the kingdom of my heart,—
A king supreme, to rule and guide
All my thoughts and all my acts ?

In highest bliss, in deepest woes,
To Thy hallowed feet I'll cling,
And hold them to my vacant breast;
In topics all, small or great,
Whatever else my tongue may speak,
Thy name shall find a place.

Whatever in this transient mart,
I choose to buy or chance to earn,
I'll place it all at Thy lotus feet,
Mortgaging, my Mahajan, all to Thee.

If a wall I raise,
Founded on self,—
And my own prison build,—
Thou shalt then break the same
With a thundering peal.

Despised by all, cuffed and kicked,
When I wander door to door,
A homeless waif,—
Thou wilt not turn me out
With Thy feet;
But there I'll find a harbour,
And therein my anchor,
And never more to drift.

When at the close of the day,
Ending all my puerile play,
Hungry I come to Thee,
Thou wilt extend Thy arms,
Give me a place in Thine open lap,
And be a mother unto me.

(Based on a Bengali song)

The Bhagavadgita on the Vedas

BY BASANTA KUMAR CHATTERJEE, M. A.

There is a prevailing impression that the *Gitā* does not fully accept the authority of the Vedas especially those portions which deal with rituals. That this impression is not correct will be clear from the 24th verse of the 16th chapter of the *Gitā* which states that in deciding what should be done and what should not be done the Śāstras must be taken as authoritative:

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्यकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।

The word शास्त्र has a definite connotation. It refers primarily to the Vedas and secondarily to the Purāṇas, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Manu-samhitā* and other Dharmaśāstras because all these books were written by sages who by devout meditation realized the true meaning of the Vedas and wrote these books in order to elucidate the Vedas. The meaning of the Vedas often lies deep below the surface and a superficial study cannot give the true import. That is why the *Mahābhārata* says that the meaning of the Vedas should be ascertained definitely with the help of the Purāṇas, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* and that the Vedas dread that person who tries to interpret the Vedas without studying these books:

इति हा स पुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेद् ।
विमेत्यत्पश्चाद्देवो मासम् प्रहरिष्यति ॥

It may be observed that both Śankarachārya and Rāmānujāchārya in interpreting the above quoted verse of the *Gitā* and the verse following it have

stated that the word Śāstra refers to the books mentioned above.

How is it then that the *Gitā* contains passages which seem to cast a slur on the Vedas? The fact is that the slur on the Vedas is only apparent. Whoever the author of the *Gitā* may be, he cannot be so self-contradictory as to state that the Vedas are the supreme authority in deciding which acts should be performed and at the same time condemn the Vedas as unreliable. Let us examine those passages of the *Gitā* which are supposed to belittle the Vedas. We get the following verses in the second chapter of the *Gitā*:

याभिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविष्ट्रितः ।
वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥
कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदात् ।
क्रियाविशेषबद्धानां भोगेश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥
भोगेश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापद्धत्येतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका तुद्धिः समधौ न विचीयते ॥

(42—44)

"Many long-drawn out words are said by those who are not wise. They stick to those passages of the Vedas which promise heaven to those who perform Vedio sacrifices. They say that there is nothing higher than the heavens. Their mind is full of desires. They say that the heavens are the highest objects of life. They speak of elaborate rituals which give enjoyment and prosperity. They are attached to enjoyment and prosperity. This attachment prevents them from concentrating their mind on God."

Here the object condemned is not the Vedas but a particular interpretation of the Vedas and those who stick to that interpretation. According to that interpretation the purpose of the Vedas is to prescribe those rituals by the performance of which one can attain prosperity in this world or the heaven after death. Enjoyment of the pleasures of the senses is the highest aim of life according to this school of philosophy. The intention of Śrī Kṛṣṇa here is, what He has abundantly made clear in other passages of the *Gītā*, that the highest aim of life is the attainment of God. It is not implied here that one cannot attain heaven by performing Vedic sacrifices. In other places of the *Gītā* it has been stated that by performing sacrifices one can attain heaven; but as one has to be born again on the earth after residence in heaven, attainment of heaven cannot be the highest aim of life. Thus we find the following verses in the ninth chapter:

त्रैविदा मां सोमपाः पूतपापा
यज्ञेरिद्धि स्वर्गंति प्रार्थयन्ते ।
ते पुण्यमासाद् सुरेन्द्रलोक-
मभन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देवमोगान् ॥
ते तं भुत्तवा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं
क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।
एवं ऋषीधर्ममनुप्रपत्ता
गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥

(20-21)

"Followers of the Vedas drink Soma juice and perform sacrifices, praying for heaven. Their sins are washed. They attain heaven and enjoy divine pleasures there. After enjoyment in heaven when their stock of merits is attenuated they enter the earth. In this way by performing the acts prescribed in the Vedas men move between heaven and earth."

It is true that the *Gītā* enjoins a higher aim of life than the attainment of heaven by performing sacrifices. But it is not to be inferred that the *Gītā* teaches us to give up the performance of sacrifices. The performance of sacrifices with the desire for heaven gives us heaven, while the performance of sacrifices without desire for heaven purifies the mind and renders it fit for the reception of divine knowledge. The *Gītā* teaches us to perform sacrifices but without any desire for heaven.

यदानन्तपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।
यतो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मर्त्यिणाम् ॥
एतान्यपि तु कर्मणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थं निश्चितं मतसुत्तमम् ॥

(XVIII. 5-6)

"Vedic sacrifices, gifts and austerities are not to be given up. They should be performed. They purify the mind. These acts should be performed without attachment and without desire for the fruit of the acts."

It must be inferred that the true intention of the Vedas is that Vedic sacrifices should be performed in such a spirit of detachment. For in the *Gītā* Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that He alone knows the true meaning of the Vedas.

‘वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ।’

(XV. 15)

"I am the author of the Vedānta Philosophy. I alone know the true meaning of the Vedas."

Again, He says:

‘वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेदः’

(*Ibid*)

"One should endeavour to know Me by means of the Vedas."

If one performs Vedic sacrifices with the desire of attaining heaven, one cannot know God. It is only if one performs Vedic sacrifices without attachment and without desire for heaven, that one can purify one's mind and render it fit for the realization of God. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says the same thing:

तमेव ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन दानेन तपसानाशकैन् ।

"The Brahmanas desire to know this Brahma by means of Vedic sacrifices, gifts and austerities performed in a detached spirit."

For the proper performance of Vedic sacrifices one has to exercise complete self-control. He has to fast, he has to sit in a particular way, he has to recite hymns with correct pronunciation, he has to think of particular ideas. Each movement of the body is prescribed in elaborate details. Some persons think that the detailed regulations are useless. But they are really necessary for the attainment of complete self-control.

We shall now examine another passage of the *Gitā* which seems to go against the Vedas:

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निलौगुण्यो भवार्जुनः ।
निर्दन्तो नित्यसत्त्वस्त्रो नियोगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥

(II. 45)

"The Vedas deal with the three qualities, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Be thou, O Arjuna, above these qualities. Do not be perturbed by the pairs of opposites, like pleasure and pain, heat and cold. Keep thy mind. Neither desire to possess anything, nor try to keep anything already in your possession."

Here the word Vedas refer to the Karmakānda of the Vedas. The word cannot obviously refer to those portions of the Vedas which deal with Brahma, for they clearly describe Brahma as being above these qualities.

‘न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति न मनः ।’

(*Kenopaniṣad* I. 3)

"Neither the eye nor speech nor the mind can reach Him."

As the mind cannot reach Him, He must be above the three Gunas.

‘अव्यवहार्यमग्राहमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यम् ।’

(*Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad* 7)

"Brahma is beyond mundane affairs, He cannot be got hold of, He has no signs, He cannot be thought of, nor described."

As the *Gitā* clearly says:

‘अनादित्वाक्षिर्जुण्ट्वात् परमात्मायमव्ययः ।’

(XIII. 31)

"Brahma is without beginning; He is beyond the three qualities; hence He is unchangeable."

There is another passage of the Vedas which also seems to belittle the Vedas:

यावानर्थं उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुतोदके ।
तावान् सर्वेनु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥

(*Gitā* II. 46)

Taking the most hostile interpretation, it means when the whole country is deluged there is no necessity of a pond, similarly when a Brahmana knows Brahma, he has no use with the Vedas. The Vedas prescribe the method of realizing Brahma. So when a person attains Brahma, he no longer

requires to know the path of attaining Brahma. So this passage also casts no doubt on the truth of the Vedas.

Again, the *Gītā* says:—

श्रुतिविप्रतिपद्मा ते यदा स्वास्थ्यति निश्चला ।
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्यसि ॥

(II. 53)

"Thy intellect has been disturbed by the Śrutis. When thy intellect will be stilled, you will attain union with God."

Some think that the word 'Śruti' here refers to the Vedas and conclude that this passage contains a reflection on the Vedas. The fact is that the word 'Śruti' has been used here in its general sense 'whatever is heard'. This is how the Āchāryas have interpreted the word. This interpretation is supported by the preceding verse:

यदा से मोहकलिं बुद्धिर्वैततरिष्यति ।
तदा गन्तासि निवेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥

(*Gītā* II. 52)

"When your intellect crosses the veil of ignorance, you will be undisturbed by what you have heard and what you will hear."

As this verse is immediately followed by the word 'श्रुतिविप्रतिपद्मा' the word 'Śruti' must be interpreted with reference to the words 'श्रोतव्य' and 'श्रुत',

that is to say, it must mean whatever is heard.

We have already quoted a passage from the *Gītā* (XVI. 24) which declares that the Śāstras (of which the basis is the Vedas) are the most authoritative. There are other passages in the *Gītā* which show that the Vedas are held in great regard.

ॐत्सदिति निदेशो ब्रह्मण्डिविभः स्मृतः ।
ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥

(XVII. 23)

"Brahma has three designations, Om, Tat and Sat. By this threefold designation of Brahma were created the Brahmanas, the Vedas and the Vedic sacrifices."

In the 15th verse of the 17th chapter the Lord refers to स्वाध्यायाभ्यस्तन (uttering the Vedas) as one of the means of Tapas or austerities. In XVII. 11 the Lord says that the best Yajña is that which is performed in accordance with the Śāstras (Vedas). In XV. 1 He says that one who understands the mysteries of the universe really knows the Vedas. It will thus be seen that the *Gītā* throughout holds the Vedas in the utmost regard and that those passages which might seem at first sight to cast a reflection on the Vedas do not really do so.



Five Specifics for Self-Purification—VII

Second Series

(Continued from the previous number)

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

TRUTH

नासते विष्वे भावो नामावो विष्वे सतः।

(Gita II. 16)

"The unreal has no existence, and the real never ceases to exist."

That which exists at all times and in all places, eternally integrally and absolutely, which is for ever the same in its nature and invariably equal, whose light lights up the whole world, whose life energizes the entire Cosmic Order, whose existence makes all animate and inanimate beings exist, and which is the authority for verification of facts, is verily the Truth. Those who live in this Truth are the real saints, and those who try to realize it by all means are the seekers of Truth. For verily those actions alone which are based on truth are right actions, words which are inspired by this truth are the sacred scriptures, conduct which conforms with it is right conduct, the religion which represents it is the true religion. The discrimination evolved out of it is true self-illumination, a life entirely one with it is true divine life and the happiness realized through it is the highest happiness.

यत् सत्यं स धर्मो यो धर्मः स प्रकाशस्तद्
सुखमिति । यदनृतं सोऽधर्मो योऽधर्मस्तत्त्वमो यत्तमस्तद्बुद्धिमिति ॥

(Mahābhārata)

"That which is truth is Dharma, that which is Dharma is light and that

which is light is happiness. That which is untruth is negation of Dharma, that which is negation of Dharma is darkness and that which is darkness is grief."

Truth alone is the everlasting, all-pervading, eternal and immortal Principle. Truth with these attributes is the Supreme Self, and the Supreme Self is the Truth. In order to attain Supreme Self as Truth, or the Truth as the Supreme Self, one has to serve Truth through the practice of Truth. Truth should be practised at all times and in all places consecrating it with the power of Truth and with Truth only as the goal. This is service of Truth through the practice of Truth.

The all-pervading truth can only be seen with the eyes of Truth, the sweet notes of its flute can be heard with the ears of truth and its touch can be received constantly only through practice of truth. We should, therefore, devote our mind, our inner and outer senses and the entire body to the seeking of Truth and the service of Truth.

Let Truth be the goal of our life. Truth is a name of God, therefore, let God alone be our goal. If there be anything without God, it is unreal, it is non-existent. What can be gained except failure if one makes the unreal his goal of life. He is sure to suffer

grief every now and then owing to his failures and consequent despair. This is the reason why the Lord declared this transitory world without Him as evanescent, full of fleeting objects and an abode of misery, and existence therein as the 'negation of happiness'. Those, therefore, who consider the fleeting and unreal objects of the world as means of true happiness and forget the Divine as the Eternal Truth and devote themselves heart and soul to acquiring worldly objects and enjoying them, throw themselves into the vain sea of becoming and dashing against the terrible waves of grief, drown themselves helplessly into that vast ocean of suffering. Realizing all these consequences of worldly life the wise man puts his faith in God as Truth, and regards Him as the seat of greatest happiness and as the only goal of life.

It is not easy for a man whose goal is fixed to commit error in the pursuit of the Goal. For the very remembrance of the goal makes him cautious and constantly watchful; and when he detects the slightest deviation from the proper course, or faces a difficult crossing, he at once abandons the wrong course and treads his path making himself secure against the difficulties ahead.

But this is true only of those whose goal is definitely fixed and who have already started their march towards it. Those, however, who have not yet set their foot on the path, or are not yet sufficiently advanced should be extremely careful about keeping their goal in view and walk steadily along the path consecrated by truth. It often happens that a man decides to go

to a certain place and actually starts on his journey, but on the way while engaged in conversation with other wayfarers he forgets his own destination and misses the way. He may even be led astray by beautiful objects of sight and forget his destination. Similarly, in the realm of spiritual seeking a seeker may be led astray. He should, therefore, be very cautious about the snares on the path and watchfully pursue his course sticking steadily to the goal. He should be cautious every moment and in every way, practising truth in everything—in thought, feeling, action, speech, spiritual discipline and practice of Bhajana.

PRACTICE OF TRUTH IN THOUGHT

"There is neither any Creator of this world, nor is it founded on truth. It has come into being as the union between males and females. Enjoyment of life is its final goal. Physical comfort, sense-pleasures, fame and renown, these alone constitute happiness in the world. The physical body must be perfectly strong, everybody must submit to my authority, and I should be able to indulge in every form of sense-pleasure without exhaustion, without losing strength of the body. In order to preserve the strength of the body nutritious food and powerful medicines may be taken when necessary. All that we have to do here is to look to our own happiness, and not to bother about the lot of others who are born only for our service. Our only aim must be to increase our power and authority over others, so that we may be rulers, leaders, guides and teachers, the adored and worshipped of all, and may live most comfortably amidst

peoples all engaged of their own accord in ministering to our needs and comforts. There should be none equal to us in authority or power. We shall decide the fate of all, their life and death. All our enemies should live in constant terror of us and submit themselves to our will. Let the world hold aloft only the banner that stands for us. Let we alone be happy and powerful, masters of all, possessors of all wealth and enjoyers of success in life, the other people only working for us as serfs."—These are all evil thoughts opposed entirely to truth. They seize only what is untruth and bring as their inevitable result the greatest suffering, the most excruciating pain, the most painful diseases and birth in an womb which brings forth the most degraded form of life. Forcibly driving out all these evil thoughts, one should nourish and cultivate the following good and noble thoughts.

1. God is; He is One, infinite, boundless, immovable, integral, unborn, imperishable, ever-present, Truth itself, eternal, equal under all circumstances, embodiment of consciousness and bliss, almighty, above all, supporters of all, pervading all, all-formed, all-seeing, regulating and governing all, existence-knowledge-bliss and the Whole. He is both attributeless and with attributes; He is with a Form and yet Formless. He is even beyond them all. He is ineffable, beyond all comprehension. Yet He is kind to His devotees, our greatest friend, the benefactors of all souls. He appears the moment He is sought, and delivers us from sufferings and leads us to His abode of infinite bliss.

2. It is under His supervision that Prakṛti creates the universe. It is His power which sustains, governs and dissolves the world.

3. This whole world has emanated from Him, it is built out of His being, and He alone pervades all these animate and inanimate existences. And it is in Him that all these have their existence.

4. Comfort, luxury, enjoyment, fame, women, progeny, kingship, leadership, preceptorship, adoration of others—these can never be the goal of human life.

5. The only goal of our life is to become an ever-ready means of making others happy and wish them well, do good to all, bring peace and solace to all and devote our mind, life, body and all that we possess to the worship of the Divine in all and thus realize Him.

These are good thoughts,—the reflection of truth in the mind. To study the sacred scriptures in order to cultivate, strengthen, extend and promote these thoughts and hear, contemplate and act up to them constitute the practice of truth in thought.

PRACTICE OF TRUTH THROUGH GOOD SENTIMENT

Passion, fear, pride, arrogance, cruelty, harshness, attachment, desire, mine-ness, I-ness, allurement, hatred, enmity, selfishness, inequality, miserliness, restlessness, dejection, sorrow, want of faith, malice, lasciviousness, anger, greed, wrath, uncleanness, etc., are evil emotions or emotions of untruth. When these are cultivated, nourished and practised, the hold of untruth increases and one begins to live in untruth. They are opposed by—

(1) Dispassion (withdrawal of the mind from all enjoyments of this and the other world, whether seen, heard or worth seeing and worth hearing).

(2) Fearlessness (remaining fearless seeing God and the play of God's will everywhere).

(3) Humility (regarding the whole world as manifestation of God, and considering oneself as His humble servant, to give up all sense of position and status).

(4) Pridelessness (to remain free of pride regarding wealth, power, health, learning, physical charm, intelligence, and all such things as gifts from God and meant only for His service).

(5) Compassion (ignoring the distinction between persons related and unrelated, melting of the heart at the mere sight of distress, and attempt made to relieve the distress).

(6) Gentleness (both in mind and speech).

(7) Unattachment (spirit of detachment from every object and action).

(8) Desirelessness (want of desire for any worldly object).

(9) Freedom from mineness (not to regard anything except God as one's own).

(10) Absence of I-ness (want of identification of the self with the body).

(11) Discrimination (intellect which analyses and finds out the eternal from the transient, the right from wrong, etc.).

(12) Love (unmotived love for all beings).

(13) Friendship (spirit of friendliness towards all beings).

(14) Renunciation (giving up of every form of enjoyment and self-interest for the good of others in order to please God).

(15) Equality (remaining equal in joy and grief, pleasure and pain honour and disgrace, praise and abuse, success and failure and seeing God with the eye of self, equally seated in all beings).

(16) Generosity (sense of exceeding delight in giving away what one possesses to serve the need of others).

(17) Peace (fixity of the mind in constant meditation or contemplation of God).

(18) Happiness (sense of pleasure seeing God in all events and circumstances).

(19) Bliss (the self is the embodiment of Bliss, I am the self and not the body—to cultivate this thought and remain merged in Bliss).

(20) Faith (complete faith in the scriptures, in the words of God and of the God-realized teacher).

(21) Absence of malice (not to detect or impute defect in others).

(22) Brahmacharya (absence of the sex-feeling in the mind).

(23) Non-anger (not to allow the mind to be carried away by anger even when there is cause for anger).

(24) Forgiveness (not to think of inflicting punishment on a wrong-doer, even when one has power to do so; on the contrary, to render him service and pray to God for showering grace on him).

(25) Endurance (capacity to endure all hardships cheerfully).

(26) Contentment (spirit of contentment with whatever received through God's dispensation).

(27) Tranquillity (quiet and tranquil state of the mind under all circumstances).

(28) Purity (freedom of the mind from all impure thoughts).

These and other sentiments like these are the right feelings; attempt should be made for their full development. This is practice of Truth through the cultivation of good sentiments.

PRACTICE OF TRUTH THROUGH RIGHT ACTION

Killing, hurting others, theft, robbery, tyranny, immoral conduct, adultery, ill-behaviour, physical impurity, deceit, treachery, improper behaviour with parents and teachers, disrespect shown to the wife, ill-treatment of children, indifference towards the distressed, oppression to animals and birds, cowardly submission to tyranny, hostility towards saints and holy men, contravention of the scriptures in action, these and others like these are wrong actions, which yield and multiply untruth. Opposed to these are actions like non-violence, selfless service, giving of charities and protection, straightforward dealing, right dealing, dealing with love, abandonment of the eight forms of sexual indulgence, showing respect to elders, physical purity, straightforward and truthful dealing in all matters and business transactions, paying respects everyday

to parents, teachers and elders and rendering service to them, love and respect shown to the wife, wishing well to the poor, the helpless and widows and doing good to them, making the children happy and doing good to them, resistance to oppression without any personal animosity, making animals and birds happy, respecting and serving real saints and high souls, performing all works, daily and occasional, assigned by the scriptures according to one's place in the fourfold social order and stage of life. When these are properly done in order only to please God, and without any selfish motive, they constitute practice of truth by right action.

PRACTICE OF TRUTH IN SPEECH

Lying, uttering harsh words, backbiting, spiteful speech, speaking highly of oneself, cursing, brawling, uttering indecent words, cutting jokes without any purpose, speaking words likely to create uneasiness, speaking with a view to harm anybody, taunting, blaming others, taking oaths either as a matter of fun, or in a spirited moment, or with a selfish motive, or as a matter of habit to evade an issue, going back on a promise, neglecting to fulfil a promise either deliberately or through carelessness, telling a lie for concealing the truth, speaking ill of others and speaking without a purpose, these are the vices of speech and hence untruth. One should carefully discard all these evils and discipline one's speech in the manner given below. The term Truth is nowadays commonly used for speaking the truth. This is why special attention is being drawn to it.

(1) In speaking truth one must be guided by a sincere motive of telling the Truth, exactly as one has heard or understood it, with one's facial and other expressions conforming to it. Truth does not necessarily mean a mere repetition of every word, in the way or order it has been heard. Firstly, it is often extremely difficult to remember the exact words in their exact order. Even when they are so remembered, it is not necessary to repeat them for the purpose of truth. Suppose we speak to an Englishman in his language and are required to report the talk to a man who does not know English. To repeat to the latter the very English words and regard it as strict observance of truth will be certainly absurd. Secondly, even when the very words are repeated, a change in accents will make a vast difference in meaning.

Therefore, speaking the truth means use of words with a sincere motive of telling a thing exactly as it has been understood, no matter what language or number of words is used. Again, it will be practice of truth if no words are used at all and the idea is conveyed through certain signs, or by means of both words and signs. If the right motive is there, and yet a fact is not made intelligible to another owing to lack of understanding on the part of the man to whom it is conveyed, it will not be practice of untruth.

(2) A truth must be told in such words as may not wound the feelings of the hearer. Everything must be said in sweet and courteous words.

(3) Nobody should be abused or slandered with a bad motive. Even if

what is said is a fact, it is harmful to him and therefore an untruth. Even with a good motive nobody should be abused unless it becomes imperatively necessary. And where there is such a necessity, all that has to be said must be said as in duty bound and also with a view to do him good. The act of abusing or backbiting a man brings in hatred for him whether consciously or unconsciously. And when one is carried away by feelings of hatred, it becomes very difficult to retain truthfulness in speech. Attachment, selfishness, desire, anger, covetousness, jealousy, fear, affection, malice, fit of emotion, etc., naturally give an untrue colour to what is said. Besides, there is another and a greater danger. Inasmuch as it is always the vices that are abused or backbitten, and never the virtues, one has to see the vices in others, think of them and store them up in the mind. These vices stored up in the mind as impressions gradually poison the heart. Thus willynilly we are brought under the influence of these evils grown in strength and are led to commit sins of various kinds to satiate the desires created by them, ultimately to undergo the most terrible sufferings. Secondly, we begin to hate the man in whom we see a vice and with every increase in our hatred his virtues also begin to appear as vices to us. Detection of vice increases hatred and hatred increases the proneness to detect vice. In this way our eye develops the evil habit of seeing vices to such an extent that we begin to see even the most virtuous of men as full of vices. This habit of seeing vices everywhere destroys the virtue of love and we find ourselves always burning in the fire of

hatred. Thirdly, with the development of the habit of seeing vices with a feeling of hatred, we begin to see them even where there is no vice, and when under the influence of this habit we abuse and backbite any body, we certainly pain his heart. An accusation even when it is grounded on fact, is generally painful; it becomes still more painful when it has no ground at all. When a man is defamed on our report, we become the cause of ill to him. We thus incur the sin, firstly, of slandering him, secondly, of false accusation, and, thirdly, of doing him evil. When the habit of slandering or backbiting others is exterminated from one's nature, the habit of detecting vices in others also will be gradually eliminated by him.

Similarly, one should not indulge in false praise. True praise of virtues is no evil, but, to a certain extent, is good in its effect. But when anybody is praised beyond proper limits either in a fit of passion or impelled by some reason or selfish motive, the speech becomes a false speech; and when the praise falls short of his virtues, it becomes a kind of abuse, painful to his heart, besides being an untruth. Praise, however, like abuse, is not an evil.

Words which when uttered may lead to injure anybody's life, though true, do not come under the definition of truth. In circumstances like that one has to be exceptionally careful in his utterance. If by keeping silent, or otherwise withholding the truth, he invites danger to himself, the danger should be welcome and hardship should be endured with cheerfulness, when thereby the danger threatening the life of another is warded

off. It is better to conceal the truth in such circumstances rather than injure anybody's life by speaking the truth. And when the occasion demands a positive telling of untruth, there being no other way of saving oneself or another's life, a statement partially concealing the fact is not regarded as sin. It will, however, not be regarded as adherence to truth.

(4) Pride of wealth, knowledge, physical charm, race or authority should not be allowed to make one's speech arrogant, but one should always be humble and courteous in speech. Departure from this, however, for the sake of duty, or for the well-being of others, without any ill-will to anybody, will not be a sin or evil.

(5) Calling names, reviling and use of filthy language make the tongue impure, add new evil impressions to the mind and bring old evil impressions to the surface. They poison the atmosphere with atoms of evil and wound the feelings of those who happen to hear those outbursts of passion and generate evil thoughts in them. Vilification in a fit of passion and utterance of indecent words are certainly forms of untruth.

Similarly, cursing is always accompanied by untruth, anger, violence and other vices, which bring degradation to the soul. The habit should be renounced altogether, and in its place the habit of speaking sweet and pleasant words calculated to increase love and do good to all should be cultivated. Like cursing words of benediction also may become expressions of untruth. This last habit also should be discarded. Wishing good

and doing good to others, however, are always, and in every condition, desirable.

(6) One should never indulge in cutting jokes with anybody without a purpose. Innocent wit or humour is not an evil by itself. On the contrary there may be need for it for preservation of health and for instilling vigour and delight in the hearts of one's companions. But it is not an easy thing to keep it pure, enlightened and truthful and maintain perfect control over it. It is very easy for untruth to be the ingredient of a joke. And when untruth enters it, many other vices may follow suit. Therefore, the best thing for those who desire to practise truth in speech, would be to refrain from cutting jokes.

(7) One should never utter such words as may injure the just rights of anybody, or stand in the way of his well-being here or in the other world. On the contrary, words should be uttered which may serve another's self-interest, and bring him aid in serving his interest, here and hereafter.

(8) To utter piercing words, to call a limbless man by a name indicating his deformity, to taunt, to speak in insulting tones and passing sarcastic remarks are vices of speech which must be wholly abandoned. For they not only carry untruth with them but help in the growth of feelings of hatred, animosity and violence, besides being in themselves a sin of wounding the feelings of others. Abandoning this crooked way of speech one should always use sweet words in making any suggestion or imparting any advice to anybody, when one's duty, or the well-being of the person addressed demands it. When somebody has to be

pulled up and set right against any of his shortcomings, defects or vices, he should be addressed in private in a loving way. Nothing should be said in words or tones that are likely to insult or offend anybody.

(9) To go back on a pledged word, or not to fulfil it, or break it deliberately is really very harmful. He who does it, loses confidence, incurs sin and his mind gets firmly fixed in untruth. One should, therefore, never take to this wrong course but should always be careful to pledge his word. But once his word is pledged he should make attempt to the best of his ability to fulfil it.

There is no harm in taking a vow with a view to ensure firmness in the performance of a duty, or a religious undertaking. But one should fully think over the implications of a vow before one takes it. And a vow as approved by one's faith must be religiously observed at all costs.

(10) To hide something essential in saying a thing is undoubtedly speaking the untruth. It is wrong to the extent it is concealed. Hypocrisy in speech must, therefore, be avoided.

(11) Indulgence in talk about others' affairs, and excessive talk are likely to involve one in the vices of scandalmongering, partiality, hatred and untruth. One should not, therefore, speak without a purpose and carefully avoid speaking needlessly about others.

These eleven rules for the practice of truth in speech should be observed by all and encouragement and support should be given in a humble way to those who observe them. Reversely, un-

truth should neither be spoken nor supported, nor encouraged in any way. This is practice of Truth in speech.

TRUTH IN SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE AND PRACTICE OF BHAJANA

In the field of spiritual discipline and practice of Bhajana, we often meet with instances of people embracing untruth in place of truth, and turning all their discipline and devotion into an art for the practice of untruth. To desire anything other than God-realization is to aim at the attainment of untruth. And to put one's faith in unreal things of the world and transitory material power in place of refuge at the feet of God and meditation on and worship of God as Truth is to base one's discipline and devotion on untruth. One should always place before oneself God as one's goal

and put one's faith completely in His power and grace, casting off all fear, weakness, doubt, error, sloth, laxity and faithlessness and devoutly worship God Himself as Truth, for God's sake with supreme faith, and with a mind assured and completely at rest and peace.

This is worship of God through the practice of truth. Through the practice indicated above, one may attain God as Truth, the one aim of human life.

It is possible for one to attain deliverance from the sea of existence through the full practice of anyone of the five specifics described in this series, carried on for God's sake. If all the five specifics are practised together, what wonder that deliverance will be doubly assured !

(Concluded)

Spirituality, Ahimsa, Cow-protection and Vegetarianism

BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

The spread of vegetarianism in India has been one of the marvels of the world. It has spread wider and deeper in India than elsewhere. There has been a variety of causes for this unique result. The most powerful of them was certainly the inculcation of the sublime Truth 'Ahimsā Paramo Dharmah' (non-injury is the supreme duty). Unless and until we place our foot on this lowest rung of the ladder of spiritual life, we can never rise to the higher rungs of Niṣkāma Karma, Yoga, Bhakti and Jñāna and attain the supreme, eternal and infinite bliss of God-love and God-realization.

There is much loose thought and talk as to what is meant by spirituality. Some equate it with ritual, some with creed, some with dogma, some with prayer, some with penance, some with renunciation, some with ethics, and some with philanthropy. But these are only the feeders of the sacred flame of spirituality. Spirituality is the realization of man as pure spirit, which is birthless and deathless, and which is of the nature of Satchidānanda. The inherent nature of spirit is brightness, beauty, love, bliss, beatitude. Ahimsā is only love in action. Vegetarianism is Ahimsā in action.

It may be said that the Hindu religion emphasizes sacrifices. But we must remember also the dynamic evolution of the concept. Buddhism delivered a frontal attack on it. But even before it came Manu gave the admonition that *Māmsa* (meat) means that if A eats B, B will eat A in the next birth (मां स अप्यथितमुत्र यस मांसमिहावश्चहम्). Manu had also formulated his grand rule that a man can get by Japa alone all the spiritual merit acquirable by sacrifices. Kulluka Bhaṭṭa says that Manu did not condemn sacrifices, but said that without them a man could attain spiritual bliss by means of Japa. The Uparichara Vasu episode in the *Mahābhārata* and the recommendation of animal substitutes made of flour (*Piṣṭapaśu*) for living animals take us one step further. The *Rāmāyaṇa* had already said that whatever food a man takes should be the food of the gods (यदनः पुरुषे भवति तदन्नस्तस्य देवताः). Thus when the human food became cent per cent vegetarian in India, the number of sacrifices decreased. The Upanishadic declaration that sacrifices are but leaky boats (पूर्वा ष्टोते शृङ्गाण वशरूपाः), the rise of the Yoga disciplines and delights, and the raptures of Bhakti and Prapatti acted further in the same direction. Of course sacrifices persist here and there. But I have no doubt that in course of time Japa-Yajña will supersede Yajña proper.

We must never forget the fact that the Hindu never wavered in his view that the cow at any rate should never be killed. His worship of the cow is the deepest thing in his nature. Possibly it was due to his realization that some of the offerings in fire to the gods were clarified butter as well as rice cooked in

milk. Possibly it was also the feeling that without such offerings there could not be the divine favour in the shape of rain and other divine bounties.* That was why the cow and the Brahman priest were spoken of in one breath as शोब्राण्डपेत्यः शुभमस्तु नित्यम् . Possibly also it was because the cow is all beneficence and is itself the highest sub-human manifestation of the glory of Ahimsā. Mahatma Gandhi says in his characteristic manner, which combines simplicity and sublimity, that "a cow is a poem of pity."

It may also be pointed out that Puranic Hinduism by associating birds and animals as the vehicles of gods has done its bit in the direction of promoting kindness to the sub-human creation. We know how the Brahmani Kite (Grauḍa) is venerated. No one will kill a monkey because it is connected in the national ideology with Hanuman. Even the active squirrel is liked because Rāma is supposed to have stroked it on its back as it broke a tiny stone to build the Adam's Bridge (Nala Setu) from India to Lankā (Ceylon). The elephant is connected with Gaṇeśa and the peacock with Subrahmaṇya. Even the dog is connected with God Bhairava and with God Dattatreyā.

Further, from the ethical point of view and as a matter of individual and

* अग्नौ प्रासादुतिः सम्यगादित्यमुपतिष्ठते ।
आदित्याज्ञायते वृष्टिर्थं ततः प्रजाः ॥

(*Manu*)

अग्नाद्वन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादप्रसंभवः ।
यज्ञाद्वति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्धवः ॥

(*Gītā III. 14*)

social experience, we can easily realize that the heart of man is hardened and brutalized by the killing of animals in the name of religion or for food. Such degradation of emotional purity will surely result, and has resulted, in animosity and hatred and lust and greed and in riots and wars. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said that lust and hate and greed are the three gates of hell (chapter 16 of the *Gītā*) and that they will destroy the excellences of the soul and that hence they must be utterly abandoned. Who knows how much of the callous hard-heartedness of man in regard to his fellow-men is due to his cruelty to his dumb brethren, viz., the birds and the animals? Who knows if the major catastrophes of war, etc., are not due to such an unholy cause? Let us not forget the great Upanishadic teaching that the food becomes the mind-'Annamayam hi somya manah.'

It is also to be remembered that very often a wrong moral theory, a superiority complex that man is the lord of the entire universe and that animals and birds exist only to be his food or for his enjoyment and diversion, is responsible for our cruelty to them. Such a mood is utterly unreasonable and unsustainable. If pursued unchecked, it will breed in some men or some States the attitude to use other men or other States as means, as mere slaves to further their ends. Let not man forget that he cannot give life or create life and that hence he cannot offer any moral justification for taking life. Mahatma Gandhi says well: "I believe that man not having been given the power of creation does not possess the right of destroying the mean-

est creature that lives. The prerogative of destruction belongs solely to the creator." Man has no right to kill except in self-defence.

Let us now look at the economic aspect. Vegetarian food is on the whole cheaper than flesh food. Further, bulls are needed for agricultural operations. The slaughter of bulls and cow is a great economic crime in India. It is argued that if flesh-eating is given up, the price of vegetarian foods will become prohibitively high. But surely intensive and extensive cultivation has not been carried on in sufficient abundance all over the world. The love of flesh is but an echo from the state of man as a nomadic hunter. It is but a sign of the ancient backwardness and brutality not yet outgrown by humanity.

From the scientific and hygienic and medical point of view, the same conclusion is inevitable. Medical opinion is uniform that cereals, taken along with vegetables and fruits, nuts and milk products give us a sound and balanced diet. Flesh food leaves its evil effects on the human body and mind. The workers living on a vegetarian diet are as capable of hard and sustained work, and are as full of endurance and energy, as those who live on a non-vegetarian diet. The scientists say that the human organs are akin to those of the non-carnivorous animals. Some pseudo-scientists say that if animals are not killed, they will crowd the human beings out of the planet. But the real scientists know that Nature will keep up the rhythm of supply and demand.

It is, however, a thousand pities that the allopathic doctors in India often

prescribe soups or Bovril or Wincarnis to their patients. It is their duty to discover and give effective vegetarian substitutes for them. Dr. Kellogg has unwaveringly insisted on vegetarian diet alone under all circumstances. He says: "There is nothing necessary or desirable for human nutrition to be found in meats or flesh, which is not found in and derived from vegetable products."

Science is intent also on vivisection as it is a help to the advancement of knowledge. It is yet a moot point whether the present degree of scientific advancement and progress could not have been achieved without it. Many scientists think it could have been. In any event even a slower rate of advance would have been desirable than quick advance with a blot in man's escutcheon.

It may be further said in regard to the cow, that there is much propriety in the Hindu speaking of the mother cow. The cow's milk is the nearest approximation to the mother's milk so far as the children are concerned. For adults also milk is a prime necessity. Much of the vitamin deficiency in us is due to lack of milk. Today there is lack of energy and stamina and power of resistance for the same reason. Fell diseases like the tuberculosis flourish only on such a soil of insufficient nutrition and low vitality. There is beginning to be heard nowadays the slogan 'Drink more milk'. If we kill more and more cows and the surviving cows are not properly bred and fed and yield only the present poor supply of milk, the slogan abovesaid would be but a voice in the wilderness. We should have better and ampler pasture lands. We

must take to scientific breeding. We must resolutely set our face against the slaughter of cows in India as well as the export of cows from India.

It is often asked, have not plants life? How are we entitled to eat vegetables and cereals? Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose is cited by these disputants as a witness. He proved that there is response in the non-living as well as the living and that the plants have life. This truth was propounded by Manu long long ago (अन्तःसंशा भवन्त्येते सुखदुःखसमन्विताः). But it does not take us far. The plants have not the delicate cerebral and nervous organization which makes pain much more acute and unbearable. The Rsis used to live on roots and fallen fruits and leaves. But such an ascetic way of life is beyond the ordinary man and is not expected of him or enjoined on him. It is surely too much to say that the plants have the same apprehension of pain or the same intensity of pain as birds and animals.

In the name of sport also there is a great deal of agony inflicted upon the dumb creation. Every well-to-do and ill-balanced human being shoulders a rifle and starts off to kill our dumb brothers. We should call to mind the moral of Aesop: "What is play to you is death to us." The killing of wild animals is a different matter altogether. But how many innocent birds, how many innocent rabbits and hares and deer are killed just to show off our powers of shooting? Nay, people are admired the more, the greater their powers of destruction. The callousness of mind which induces a man to kill defenceless and non-destructive animals lead the sportsman

to adopt a similar mentality in relation to his fellow human beings in other States as well.

It is wrong to say that from the point of view of health and strength and longevity the non-vegetarians have any advantage over the vegetarians. There are as many long-lived and healthy and strong men among the latter as among the former. Nay, the Insurance Societies will receive more of the former as assurable lives than of the latter. Even if the facts were otherwise, the Hindu mind has found that, even if there is any inferiority in non-vegetarian diet, it can be made good by Brahmacharya and Yoga. It is therefore strange that the Military Department practically bars the Army and the Navy to the Indian Brahman students and says that only non-vegetarian rations will be provided for the Indian naval ratings. If Indian public opinion suitably and overwhelmingly asserts itself, all such silly restrictions will swiftly disappear.

Let me now discuss the publicity and institutional aspects of the question and especially of cow protection. In India the gramophone and the radio, the magic lantern, the press, the platform, street preaching, the stage, and the cinema should be used for propagandizing on behalf of Ahimsā and vegetarianism. The great drama *Nāgānanda* by Śrī Harṣa should be acted and filmed all over the country. The people must be made to realize and remember the great moral in it:

‘नित्यं प्राणाभिधाताद्विरम कुरु प्राक् कृते चानुतापम्।’

—Nay, the concepts of Ahimsā and vegetarianism must be given a prominent place in school books and even in nursery rhymes. More than anything else great literature and art must give their steady and unwavering and uplifting support to the cause.

So far as institutions are concerned, we have some good institutions to our credit, but they do not go far enough. The Government has its Veterinary Department. The S. P. C. A. does what it can to prevent cruelty to animals. But the existing legislation on the point has to be made more effective. The Pinjrapole and the Gosala save old cows which are past the stage of milking and the cows redeemed from the stroke of the butcher's knife. But these institutions touch only the fringe of the problem and give relief only to a limited number of cows. The milkman squeezes the last drop of milk from the cow and starves the calf. We want calf welfare centres as much as child welfare centres. But the most important desideratum is the municipalization of the urban milk supply and the opening of civic dairy farms. When that happens the cruel and heartless treatment of cows by urban cowherds will become an ugly dream of the past. There may also, I hope, come a time—sooner or later, sooner than later—when the Law, which is the spearhead of the national conscience, will prohibit cowslaughter, nay, the slaughter of all animals for food or for worship, and we shall have not merely peace and goodwill among men but also mercy unto all living things under the sovereignty of Ahimsā.

The Secret of Sacrifice

BY Y. JAGANNATHAM, B. A.

God and His possessions

All recognized works on devotion testify to the fact that creation, whether transcendental or mundane, is mainly the work of the one and indivisible power of the Supreme Lord and that the individual soul is a scintilla or an atom of the self-same power. As such, both the Jivas and the realms in which they seek their enjoyment by virtue of their previous deeds are the sole possessions of the Lord and it goes without saying that He is at perfect liberty to handle His possessions as He pleases. We are, therefore, connected with Him as hand to a man; in other words, we are as instruments in His hand. When we seek to lord it over in this world, the whole of the mundane sphere appears to be our rightful possession and we are naturally loath to part with what we claim as our own. But when by the grace of God, we are favoured with the correct knowledge of our real position which enables us to see things in their true, perspective we will be naturally led to conclude that all the worlds together with their contents exclusively belong to Iswara and we have no claim in them even to an extent of a pin-point. We will know then that it is nothing short of a larceny if we appropriate things so clearly known as not to belong to us.

The daily offering

But we know at the same time that we have to keep body and soul together even for the service of the Godhead, and for this we are tempted and even forced

to enjoy God's possessions, since there is no other alternative. The well-informed and discriminating devotee finding himself placed among what are God's own, remembers them always as such, and enjoys them to the minimum extent just for the sustenance of his body with consent duly obtained from the Lord. The process of what is termed Nivedanam observed in all households of devotees by placing in front of Šrimūrti the several newly-cooked dishes of the day intended for our consumption is a constant reminder of our sacrificing spirit and sole dependence on the Lord even for our bodily sustenance. Offering to God in full remembrance of what is His own constitutes the aforesaid Nivedanam and when our guileless devotion to Him could detect His consenting to our appropriating the same, the offering is now transformed into what the devotee calls a Great Favour, Mahāprasāda, and when we enjoy the same, we enjoy the very fruit of our sacrifice, and not a thing obtained by stealthy or dishonest means.

Devotee's life of sacrifice

The devotee remembers that there are no two views with respect to our premier Swadharma which is service to the Godhead and that the maintenance of the body is a sine-qua-non until that is fully achieved. The way that one has to maintain the body is by labour to acquire money in rightful ways and by its means to perform the five Great Sacraments or Mahāyajñas such as the

teaching of the sacred scriptures, the oblation of water and food to the manes, the offering to gods of rice and clarified butter through fire, the distribution of food to all creatures in general and rendering hospitality to holy guests and Sadhus. As such, the daily life of a devotee commences with sacrifices, is nurtured in sacrifices and is, in short, shaped into one of endless sacrifices. Even for a moment he does not live for himself, but only for others. He clearly remembers that all living beings in creation have as much right to enjoy the very possessions which he is now enjoying by the grace and consent of the All-bountiful Lord. He does not forget even for a moment that as an *Amīśa* of *Iśwara* Himself, the responsibility of contributing to the welfare of other Jivas and created world has as much devolved upon him as on the Lord of the Universe, and that since himself, his bodies and all things found in his charge are the sole possessions of the Supreme Lord, he has to engage himself and all that is related to him in the wholetime service of *Iśwara* and His Cosmic creation.

The daily routine of an ordinary householder is so familiar to *Householder-life transformed into Devotee-life* us that it needs no description at all; the master of the house is the chief earner; his consort, the cook and ministering angel of the family and themselves and their children are the sole participants of their wealth and happiness. His life is thus so very self-centred. But if by the grace of God or Sadhus, real and saving knowledge of the duties of a Jiva towards the Lord and His creation has dawned on the sable horizon of the heart of such a

self-centred householder, sacrificing spirit need not creep in by inches for that is the way with waverers and bargainers. Just as the dawn automatically dispels the gloom of the world, the Divine Grace once for all illumines the heart of that fortunate soul and forthwith begins the life of wholesale sacrifice. His house is from that moment a *Dharmaśala* or a charitable institution. He constitutes himself as its trustee and his wife and children are either cooks or servants rendering honorary but most willing loving service in that blessed house of charity. Guests pour in and sumptuous meal is served to them. If any of them eulogizes his charity, he replies with humility, "All is yours and there is nothing mine in this." He partakes of the residue of food found in the vessels, if any, and his wife and children follow suit. The *Gitā* calls this residue "Yajña-consecrated" food. Feeding others in the name of God is verily a sacrifice, Yajña, and whatever remained is designated also *Amīta*, nectar-like remnant. By partaking of this, the body is sustained, the Lord is mightily pleased and even the world's well-being is secured. The common householder is thus transformed into an ideal devotee-householder.

It may be questioned, "Why not sacrifice our all keeping *Jnana-Yajna* something just needed for our bodily sustenance? For it may so happen at times that nothing remains in the vessels." To this we reply that this is not a sacrifice of a par excellent nature. It would be a real merit on our part if in our service to the Godhead our bodily maintenance

did not loom large in our view. The spirit of real sacrifice requires that the same shall be left to the will of the Lord; else there is no escape from bondage wrought by our own actions. It may be further questioned, "Should we not cook for ourselves when nothing remained in the vessels for our consumption?" To this also we reply that that course is not permissible; for the *Gitā* clearly asserts that it is sinful to cook for our self-enjoyment. We must, on the other hand, feel happy that it is the will of the Lord that we should forego our meal for the day. For He is not only our Lord but our greatest well-wisher also. His love should, therefore, be watched both when He makes us starve and feeds us sumptuously. This is Jñāna-Yajña, as the *Gitā* puts it.

In fact, this world is full of sacrifices. The master sacrifices for the servant and the servant for his master.

The toiling of the husband to keep his consort happy and the ministerings of the consort to find her husband happy are all sacrifices. In short, whatever energy we spend in our dealings with others is verily a sacrifice and as all such actions of ours are generally governed by self-interest, these sacrifices forge chains of bondage to the doer. These are the very sacrifices referred to by the *Gitā* when it says that "to the non-sacrificer this world is not, whence the other?" It is for this reason that it is enjoined by the *Gitā* that even sacrificial acts should be performed in a spirit of unattachment. Need we say that sacrifice is ingrained in the very life of a Jīva when we

remember that the very Lord of the universe created beings along with sacrifices to help them for their multiplication and well-being?

Wheel of sacrifices

In grateful appreciation of the sacrifice done by the inhabitants of the earth in the shape of offering through fire of balls of rice with clarified butter, the dwellers of the heaven-world perform the return sacrifice of offering them seasonal rains which helps for the plentiful production of milch cattle and crops on earth and this once again enables the dwellers of earth to perform a further sacrifice. The wheel of sacrifices begins thus to roll on and all the worlds are maintained aright in their proper spheres. Even the Lord who is always at work in supporting and maintaining the worlds is pleased beyond measure for such mutual sacrifices as His work is lightened by the people of this world participating in His labour of love.

Let us now see if it is impracticable for persons of the common run of life to perform sacrificing acts with utter dispassion and as a piece of selfless service to the God-head. Suppose a holy mendicant cried for alms in front of a house tenanted by two ladies with their families. Each of the good ladies rushes out with her offering of rice and deposits the same in his begging bowl. The mendicant stops the retiring ladies and enquires of them the motive which has impelled them to render this charity to him. Says one lady "Good Sire! You are a cripple, and cannot earn for yourself. Is it not a virtuous act to help persons of your kind? Besides, God

has given us plenty to eat and spare and I too am judicious enough in spotting out persons deserving my charity. I am actually moved to tears when I see your miserable person. Please, therefore, appreciate my charity and make yourself comfortable."

The other lady now gives her answer, "Good Sire ! What have I done to you ? Restoring to you what is rightfully your own is no charity at all. You have as much right over the store of rice in my house as my husband and children, and if you have not yourself taken away your possession, it is just to see me play the pastime of an instrument in restoring yours to you. Please no more refer to my insignificant act, and if I deserve it, bless me with opportunities for similar services to all and sundry."

The replies speak for themselves. Both are sacrificing acts of charity, no doubt, and superficially considered, one exactly remembers the other; but the one done by the former is no more than a broad-minded fruitive act full of binding nature while that of the latter is a selfless and sacrificing act dedicated to God which forthwith redeems the doer from the clutches of Karma and places her at the portals of Mukti. So it is that the external act is no criterion to a man's conduct, and, as stated in the *Gitā*, the Lord considered it by far inferior to the harmonized wisdom or Buddhi-Yoga that impelled its performance.

Let us next take the case of a printing Press which brings out a daily paper for the benefit of the public. We notice scores of workmen, both

(2) The printing press and its workmen

skilled and unskilled, busily engaged in the Press. Some compose matter; some are machine-men plying their job; some strike copies; some read proofs; some arrange pages of the issue; some fold issues into convenient sizes; some prepare wrappers for the same; some affix postage and some post the issues in time to catch the mails—such are the multifarious duties of the several workmen. But each class of workmen confine themselves to their own posts and turn out their respective duties and do not in the least encroach upon the duties of other classes. The Editor of the paper who is to supervise their duties interests himself in watching whether the issue of the day was brought out and published in time. Even the workmen co-operate and contribute for the timely issue of the paper and feel gratified if the paper is so issued. But the issue of the paper is sure to be delayed or held up if any one of the workmen strikes work or plays with his job. It is now time for the Editor to interfere and through his subordinates he may see the delinquent either punished or replaced. Even if something went wrong with the printing machinery, he can get it set right under his supervision and in either case there is no need for his personal interference.

The simile
unravelled

This world of ours is the printing Press. We are all workmen in it and the very God is its Lord and Controller. Just as the Editor ceaselessly interests himself to ensure the punctual publication of his paper, the Lord of the universe also ceaselessly interests Himself for the well-being of the world of His creation. We are placed at our posts amidst His

possessions and we are to do His work and obey His commands. This is our Swadharma as stated already and so long as we perform the same either with dispassion or otherwise the progress and well-being of the Cosmic Creation is ensured. But when we begin to transgress His laws and develop rupturous disposition, it is as if we shirk our duties towards Him and become as spokes in the wheel of world's progress. God's grace is denied to us as by our conduct we offend against Him and we are then hauled up before Him for punishment. The Lord then descends to weed out the retarders of progress. The clock of this world which had stopped and was even put back by the disruptive elements then once again begins to go and all becomes well again through His grace.

Just as the employees in the printing Press help the regular publication of the daily paper by discharging their duties either in view of their monthly wages or guided by an enthusiasm to ensure its prompt publication, people here on earth may perform their Swadharma by doing God's work either in view of their own well-being or partly or mainly for the well-being of the world. Performed either way, God's will was done here as the Editor's will was done there by the co-operation of

his Office Staff. Performance of one's Swadharma is verily a sacrifice, and when one's own well-being looms large in it, it is merely a fruitive sacrificing act, but when one feels in its performance that he is simply a fulfiller of the Great Plan of God, and that it is a mere accident if in so doing, his daily needs, Yogakṣema, are secured, it is a selfless sacrificing act dedicated to God as stated elsewhere. The former binds the doer while the latter delivers him from bondage. This is the real secret of sacrifice.

*Lord Himself
is sacrifice*

Let me in conclusion remind the reader that we should not even for a moment forget that the Lord Himself is an embodiment of sacrifice. When with the advent of Hiranyakṣa, the one having an eye on gold, the spirit of sacrifice gradually disappeared from the face of the earth, the latter lost its support and naturally sank low into the miry region of rank sensualism; and the Lord of sacrifices had to take the form of a boar reputed for free movements both on earth and in the mire, and with his all-powerful snout heaved up the earth to its original level making short work of the just-mentioned typical opponent of sacrifice. Did not the Lord Himself declare in the *Gitā* that the whole creation hinges on sacrifice, in other words, on Himself?



Sri Krishna and His Message

By SWAMI ASESHANANDA

The whole world is in the vortex of a huge conflagration. Catastrophic cataclysms have visited the different parts of the globe with whirlwind speed and Himalayan danger. Ominous clouds are hovering dark on the horizon. Their deafening clamours are threatening a wholesale destruction. From the Atlantic, the war has spread to the Pacific. The rising flame has gushed out like a forest-fire jumping from wood to wood favoured by the wind of a sombre-looking dismal sky. The blaze and the scorching heat are being felt from far and near with extreme discomfort and uneasiness. Minds of the old and the young have become perplexed. Unsophisticated common folk have grown panicky. The hearts of women have become agitated and seriously disturbed because of this chaotic condition. Nobody can say what will happen tomorrow. The war is knocking at the very gates of India. The situation has become bitterly grave and complicated since the fall of Malaya and Rangoon. The demon is raising its ugly head with grim sinister look and casting its shadow over this land. There is fear in the minds of the masses and scare in the heart of the classes. Everything seems to be unhinged and gone out of joints. How true are the words of the poet:—

"To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to
think
What man has made of man."

But what is the remedy? Are we to cringe in fear, shed imbecile tears and run away with life? Far from it. This is the time when we should turn to the pages of the *Gītā* in a reverential attitude and draw inspiration from it. Sri Kṛṣṇa, the sweetest and the bravest child of Mother India, is our friend, philosopher and guide at this time of grave crisis. He will show us the way which will lead us to our long cherished enfranchisement. If we make him our Generalissimo, He will never let us down. If we voluntarily offer ourselves to His charge, we will come out triumphant with glowing colours in this present campaign when our hearth and home, our cloister and shrine are seriously threatened. Everything will be safe and we will emerge victorious if we make the charioteer of Arjuna as our charioteer. What are his words? Let us hear his thundering voice which roared like a lion to instil courage and faith in the mind of the hero when he was cast down by grief. We too are in the same predicament. We have become panicky and sorrow-stricken. Consternation has spread its demoralizing influence on our bosom. We have been assailed by scare and possessed by fear. The gloom of a dark night has enveloped our soul and we do not know what to do. Will not the words of Pārthaśārathi be sufficient to allay our fear and dispel our panic? How mighty and majestic the words are! If they cannot galvanize our spirit

and charge our mind with new vigour and fire of enthusiasm what else in the world will be able to do? The stimulating words came as a slashing blow to explode the fear of Arjuna. Their effect was tremendous. Śrī Kṛṣṇa said "Whence has this loathsome feeling of dejection come upon thee in such a crisis? It is un-Aryanlike, disgraceful, ignoble and contrary to the attainments of the highest good. Yield not to unmanliness, O Pārtha! Ill doth it become thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness and arise, O scorcher of thine enemies."

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the soul of our race, the embodied symbol of spirituality and the greatest patriot of our country. The genius of the nation finds its highest landmark in Him as an upholder of truth and as a champion of the poor and the distressed. His life is an epic of unselfish service and sacrifice at the altar of our motherland. He converted the tears of Arjuna into pearls of joy and loving consecration by his moving speech which brought fresh life of animation into his otherwise dead bones and dried up soul. He goaded him to fight—to discharge his duties courageously regardless of consequences. He reprimanded his vacillating spirit and inspired him to act nobly and to die bravely, if need be, for the defence of his country. A true patriot considers the prestige and freedom of his country as of supreme value. To him there is no religion higher than that. He deems his country as his God and God as his country. He reckons no sacrifice as too great to bring forward the aspired goal of liberation. The pregnant words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa tell

this burning tale in a most emphatic and unambiguous language. When he argued to convince Arjuna about the imperative necessity of taking up arms against his enemies as a defender of his faith, and as a protector of his country and people, he did never speak as a half-naked religious mendicant but as a warrior-prophet He exhorted him thus: "Looking at thy own duty, thou oughtest not to waver, for there is nothing higher for a soldier than a righteous war. Fortunate, certainly, are those who are called to fight in such a battle that comes unsought as an open gate to heaven. But if thou refusest to engage in this righteous warfare, O Pārtha, then forfeiting thine own Dharma and honour, thou shalt incur sin." And again, "The world also will ever hold thee in reprobation. To the honoured, infamy and disrepute are surely worse than death. Thine enemies cavilling at thy great prowess will say of thee things that are not to be uttered. What could be more intolerable than this. Dying thou gainest Heaven, conquering thou enjoyest the wide earth. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, arise, gird up your loins, steel your heart and be resolved to fight."

The most striking feature that arrests our attention in the life of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the many-sidedness of his character. He was a versatile genius. His personality shines luminous as a king and a philosopher, as a lover and a statesman and what not? Qualities that are divergent and quite at variance found their meeting ground in him. Buddha is great as a Sannyāsī but Śrī Kṛṣṇa is great not only as a most

wonderful Sannyāsi but also as a most remarkable householder. He lived the life of perfect detachment amidst a thousand cares and responsibilities of a crowded life. He embodied in his unique and outstanding character the shining example of the truths that he preached in the *Gitā*. He was the *Gitā* personified and a living commentary of it. It is no wonder then that Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone can lay claim to our spontaneous allegiance and be the leader of our nation at this time of turmoil when our very existence, our very civilization and culture are threatened with a grave peril.

The gospel preached by Śrī Kṛṣṇa is nothing but a gospel of strength and fearlessness. He has preached all through his life, through the different platforms of war, and the seclusion of the monastery, a man-making, soul-stirring religion which is head and shoulders above cowardice and weakness. He has advocated a dynamic view of life which must throw away weakness and inertia like poison from the structure of society and its body-politic. He ruthlessly condemned a life of slavery and degradation and inculcated a most revolutionary cult which gave a rude shock to the hide-bound Puritans and narrow-minded fundamentalists of the day. He said "A soldier is a sage and a martyr when he dies in the battle-field for the freedom of his country. If he goes to the front out of voluntary will and not through forced compulsion, his is a noble act. The joy of death in a holy war, in defence of the Home and the shrine inspired by a lofty feeling of duty is thrice blessed. Without surrender-

ing to the powers of aggression and evil if a man meets his opponent heroically he is cent per cent spiritual. Death in such a cause is a most coveted one which every faithful follower should emulate and enshrine in the deep corner of his heart. It is above all recrimination, as it is sure to bring the desired goal of salvation in its wake." How lofty and edifying the utterances are! How beautifully He has combined religion and politics and given a legitimate place to spirituality and practicality without degrading the one or vitiating the other. In another place he has remarked—"Better is one's own Dharma, though imperfect, than the Dharma of another well-performed. He who does the duty imposed on him by his own nature incurs no sin. From Whom all beings have proceeded and by Whom all this is pervaded by worshiping Him through the performance of his own duty, a man attains perfection."

The need of the hour demands the resurgence of the *Gitā* spirit in life. We must feel that we are a strong and virile race and we are marked by Providence to play an important part in the drama of the world. If we are conscious of our spiritual heritage and imbued with the fire of strength all our weakness of political or other subordinations will vanish like mist before the rise of the early dawn. Hinduism must be aggressive and a forceful factor in the new world-order that is sure to usher in after the end of this titanic war of human destruction. The keynote of the *Gitā*, the crest-jewel of the Upaniṣads, has been expressed in inspiring language by Swami Vivekananda who considered

it as a universal gospel which will afford perennial joy to all devout truth-seekers all over the world. He says—"Strength, strength is what it speaks to me from every page. This is the one great thing to remember. It has been the one great lesson, I have been taught in my life. Strength, it says, strength, Oh man, be not weak. Are there no human weaknesses? says man. There are, says *Gītā*, but will more weaknesses heal them, would you try to wash dirt with dirt? Will sin cure sin, weakness cure weakness? So stand up and be strong. Aye, it is the only literature in the world where you find the word 'Abhaya' 'fearless' used again and again; in no other scripture is the adjective applied either to God or to man. And in my mind rises from the past the vision of the great Emperor of the West, Alexander the Great, and I see as it were in a picture the great monarch standing on the banks of the Indus talking to one of our Sannyāsins in the forest, the old man he was talking to, perhaps naked, sitting on a block of stone, and the Emperor, astonished at his wisdom tempting him with gold and honour to come over to Greece. And this humble naked Faqir smiles at his gold, smiles at his temptations and refuses and then the Emperor standing in his authority as an Emperor says, "I will kill you if you don't come" and the man burst out into a laugh and says, "Me, you kill Emperor of the material world? Never, never have you spoken such a damned lie? Who can kill me? For I am spirit unborn and undecaying! Never was I born, never do I die. I have realized my unity with the infinite spirit which is eternal and indestructible. This is strength. As one of your blood

let me tell you my friends, that the Upaniṣads and the *Gītā* are the great mine of strength. Therein lies strength to invigorate the whole world. They will call with triumphant voice upon the weak, the miserable, the down-trodden of all races, all creeds, all sects to stand on their feet and be free;—freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom, spiritual freedom are the watchwords of these invigorating scriptures."

The voice of Mother India spoke once and will speak today through Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is a brilliant star of the highest magnitude—a luminous figure in world-history. He is the right person and true Ambassador to deliver India's message to the inebriated war-lords and imperialistic nations. He kindled a new faith in the destiny of the Hindu race and strove to establish the kingdom of Heaven on earth on the cementing bond of fraternity and international fellowship. During His time, He was virtually the maker of kings and kingdoms, but He never usurped the throne for imperialistic purposes. How unattached, calm and perfectly well-balanced He was! How amidst all the din and bustle of the battle, He kept the perfect equanimity of mind! His intellect was profound. His heart was as big as the vast ocean. There was no sentimentalism or parochialism in him. He did never preach an exclusive religion of bitter communalism nor a runions cult of disintegrated circumscribed nationalism. The goal he has set forth is not peace and freedom for one nation alone but removing of shackles and snapping the chord of bondage of all the nations of the world.

Let us cling to that grand and broad ideal adumbrated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, our chosen hero, and pin our faith in Him with all the more zest and avidity at this psychological moment, when brothers are flying at the throat of brothers and nations are running amuck as if gone mad—mad with hatred, mad with greed and mad for wreaking vengeance on their adversaries. The great redeemer is our Chief, the great deliverer is the abode and place of our refuge. Is there any cause of fear?

मूर्कं करोति वाचालं पकुं लहृयते गिरिम्।
यत्कृष्णा तमहं बन्दे परमानन्दमाधवम्॥
यत्र येगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पाथो भनुर्पः।
तत्र श्रीविजयो भूतिषुर्वा नीतिर्विर्मम्॥

'He whose compassion makes the dumb eloquent and the cripple cross mountains of Himalayan height, Him do I salute with my lowly heart, the All-bliss Mādhava. Wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yoga, wherever there is Pārtha, the wielder of the bow, there will surely be virtue and victory, prosperity and righteousness. Such is my sincere opinion and firm conviction.'

The Treasure of Treasures

BY SWAMI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

It was about the year 1150 A. D. Madura was ruled by a Pandya King. He was a great patron of learning. He gave freely to poets. His queen was very learned and intelligent.

Of all the Pandits patronised by the king, Vidwajjana Kolahala was very celebrated. He was the terror of Pandits. None dared to challenge him. He exacted tributes from other Pandits. He used to travel in a palanquin, followed by a showy retinue, blowing aloud his trumpet. Kolahala was an incarnation of self-conceit.

He was terrible to any Pandit who might be in arrear in the payment of his tribute.

Śrī Bhashyacharya, was such a Pandit, an humble simple teacher, with sufficient learning for his work. One day the agent of Kolahala came to his pial school. The teacher was absent. A

boy of barely twelve years answered his enquiries.

"Tell your Bhashyacharya", said the agent, "that he must wait upon our Vidwajjana Kolahala with his tribute—this very day; or the consequence will be serious." The boy boldly retorted: "Kindly, Sir, know that our master shall not pay a pie to self-concited fools. Go and tell him like that..."

Kolahala was enraged at this childish bravado. He called Bhashyacharya for a debate. Bhashyacharya felt nervous. That precocious boy whose name was Yamuna, said: "Sir, take hope; tell Kolahala that your disciple will challenge him. I shall bring down his pride and win laurels for you." The master hesitatingly consented. Yamuna went to the court, took his seat and faced the renowned Kolahala boldly. "A mere boy to challenge the invulnerable Kolahala! Can a calf challenge a lion, a

mud horse cross a flood ? The boy is going to be defeated at the very outset !” This was the impression of the audience from the king to the peasant. Only the queen saw the lustre of intelligence in the boy and felt assured of his success. “If he does not win I shall be your slave”, said the queen. “If this impudent boy defeats my Pandit I shall share with him half my kingdom”, said the king.

The discussion commenced. “Silly boy”, began the infuriated Kolāhala, “do you know the alphabets ? Can you write your name properly? Impudent fellow, how dare you sit before me like that; answer my questions.”

The boy retorted, “My dear sir, a spark of fire is enough to burn a heap of cotton. Go on, put me questions. I shall answer them.” The Pandit put him intricate questions. The boy answered them all boldly and correctly. “All right”, said the Pandit, “boy, now put me your questions. I shall answer them.” “Very well”, said Yamuna. He put him three inconvenient and clever questions: “Pandit, I say that your mother is not barren. Our king is virtuous. The queen is chaste. Deny these three statements if you can.” How could he deny these truths ? How could his mother be barren ? How could he maintain that the king was not virtuous and the queen not chaste ? The Pandit was discomfited. The king asked Yamuna to deny his statements. The boy replied, “Listen, Sir, there is a saying one tree cannot be a grove; nor one child a child. Your mother has only one child in you. So she is considered barren. The king receives the sins of his

subjects. So he cannot be wholly virtuous. A woman is first offered to Agni, Varuna and Indra and then to her husband. So the queen is not chaste.” The Pandit hung down his head. The audience applauded the young prodigy. The king admired his genius and gave him half the kingdom. The queen called him *Alavandar* (he who came to rule).

The boy became a ruler. Kolāhala became his servant. Bhashyacharya was filled with joy. Alavandar reigned for many years maintaining wonderful peace and justice in his small kingdom. But his life was not to be wasted in royal luxury. It was meant for a holier purpose. This purpose was revealed to him by a holy man.

II

Alavandar was the grandson of Nathamuni, a celebrated Bhakta. He was a devotee of the Alvars whose hymns were the delight of his life. He was very fond of his grandchild and dedicated him to the service of Ranganatha. Nathamuni had a faithful disciple in Rama Misra generally known as Manakkal Nambi. He was a great scholar and devotee. He imbibed the spirit of the Alvars from his Guru. Alavandar was a small child when Nathamuni died. “Manakkal Nambi, when my grandson grows to manhood kindly reveal to him the treasure which I held dearly all my life. That is the rich legacy I leave behind. Ask him to find it in the sanctum of Srirangam. Jaya Ranga !” These were the last words of the great soul.

The Bhakta Nambi waited for the opportune moment. King Alavandar could not find peace by wearing the crown

and wielding the sceptre. His heart yearned for something deeper and more permanent than fleeting pleasures. The luxuries of the palace ceased to enchant him. The throne was not very comfortable. Every kingdom has its enemy. Even the kingdom of heaven has a Satan. Earth and heaven are battle-fields of the opposite forces. Alavandar's little realm could not be an exception to it. He wanted a large amount of money to wage war against his enemies.

At that time our Manakkal Nambi came to Madura. His purpose was to convert Alavandar and deliver Nathamuni's message. He did not approach the king directly. He got the confidence of the royal cook and gave him daily a sattvic herb for the king's dish. It was nicely cooked and served daily. The king liked it very much. One day Nambi did not bring it. The king felt the food tasteless without it.

King: Why have you not prepared it today?

Cook: My Lord, the old Brahman did not bring it as usual.

K: Which old Brahman?

C: My Lord, a Brahman brings the herb everyday and says, 'Kindly cook this, and serve it to my loving king.'

K: Who is he? Bring him to me.

III

Next day Manakkal Nambi brought the herb. He was taken to the king. The king was struck by the pious mien of the Brahman. He reverentially bowed to him and seated him respectfully.

K: Holy Sire, I am delighted to see you. It seems as if you are my Guru. My psychic love is flowing towards you. Thy herb satisfied not my palate alone, but also my soul. I am very much obliged to you. Sire, demand any favour, any treasure from me.

Nambi: O King, I have not come here to receive any treasure; I have come to reveal a great treasure of which you are the heir.

K: What is that treasure? How am I the heir of it? Where is it? I am badly in need of money for a war.

N: Hear me, O King; your grandfather was the revered Nathamuni. I am his humble disciple. During his last moments he entrusted me with the richest treasure of the world to be safely passed on to you when you are a man. Then you were a small child and now you are a man, a king, one who has seen the ins and outs of life. You yearn for that treasure now.

K: Yes, holy sire, I remember my grandfather. How kind he was to me! Ah, has he bequeathed me such a big treasure. I am needy now. Kindly tell me where that treasure is...

N: Between two living rivers, in a fortified place, a huge snake guards that treasure. There is a Mantra to attain it. The heart's love and the mind's strength are necessary to obtain it. Sire, by obtaining that treasure you obtain all.

K: O Holy saint, come and show me that treasure. I shall possess it in the name of my good grandfather.

N: Very well; then leave behind all cares, all other thoughts. Per-

fect concentration, intense aspiration and thorough faith are necessary to get that great treasure. Renounce all thoughts and attachments and follow me.

Alavandar placed the state under the care of responsible officials and started with Manakkal Nambi. The *Gītā* was the gospel of Nambi. He read it every day from cover to cover. Without the study of the *Gītā* he never took his meals. Alavandar listened to the *Gītā* carefully. The *Gītā* purified his heart. He requested Nambi to reveal to him the heart of the *Gītā*. For the *Bhagavadgītā* is no ordinary book. The printing press may bring out one commentary after another, but mere book study is not enough. The seeker must be in earnest and receive the teachings of the *Gītā* from a Guru. He must first hear, meditate and then read. Alavandar got initiation. He could not proceed further with his journey without finishing the book. Nambi explained the whole book to him and Alavandar contemplated thus:—

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa has already given me a priceless treasure. Where is a treasure like the *Gītā*—a wealth of love, devotion and knowledge. It tells me what is real and what is unreal. It directs me to the feet of Puruṣottama. There I shall surrender myself. I have been living in the false glamour of royal luxury. I found no peace there. I studied a world of books for no good. One verse of the *Gītā* has given me the peace and joy which a thousand books did not give. The company of this Sādhu has given me a delight which the pleasures of palaces did not give.

Serving the holy gives me greater joy than wielding the sceptre. A Sādhu's blessing is superior to a golden crown. I am no more a slave of vanity and vanishing pleasures. I shall henceforward be a servant of God and of His true devotees. I shall offer myself to him in utter surrender. I shall live in Him. Whatever I think, do or speak, shall be dedicated to Him. He lives in my heart; yet I could not see him. What is the use of my book-learning? He is everywhere in the world. Yet I am so blind that I cannot see Him anywhere. He is the Truth, Knowledge, Bliss. Yet I am seeking these elsewhere. He promises that his Bhakta shall have His grace. Yet I do not believe in Him and follow the little mind of doubt and division. This shall not be. I shall be a changed man. From now I shall be God's man. In Him I take shelter. I leave behind the golden thrones. I make my heart the throne of God. Master, I know now the Reality. I do not require any treasure on earth. Lead me to the treasure of treasures."

Nambi was greatly satisfied at the ripeness of Alavandar's heart. Sire, the treasure I am going to show you is not evanescent like others. It is an eternal treasure. Follow me. Alavandar quietly followed Nambi.

IV

Both came to Srirangam. They entered the temple. It was evening. Pūja was going on. Brahmans chanted the Vedas. Bhaktas sang the hymns of the Alvars. Alavandar was reborn. The holy atmosphere vibrated in him. The hymns thrilled his heart. The priest was waving a holy Light. Just

at that moment Manakkal Nambi told Alavandar, "My Child, see, this is the treasure of treasures that your grandfather has bequeathed to you. Possess it. Allow it to possess you. Live in it. Om Namo Nārāyaṇāya is the Mantra to attain it."

Alavandar was lost in ecstasy. "O what an unparalleled treasure! Gratitude to my grandfather who possessed such a heaven of riches. Gratitude to you, master Nambi, for having prepared my heart to see and have such an effulgent treasure. My God, Nārāyaṇa, Govinda, Viṣṇu, Ranganatha, I surrender myself to you! Possess this humble servant. Your Bhakti shall be my priceless treasure. What is kingdom and royalty compared to the touch of your lotus feet. What I called mine is nothing but a trivial atom in the vast infinite. God, I was preparing for war with an external enemy. But I found out by your good grace the enemies lurking within me—lust, envy, pride, fear, doubt, arrogance, ignorance, insincerity, indolence, etc. I repeat your Mantra to get rid of those enemies. Nambi has shown me the richest treasure. Yes it is as he described. Kauveri and Cole-roon are surrounding the temple-city. The serpent Ādiśeṣa guards you. You repose there in superconscious bliss. Earth's treasure comes and goes. It is impermanent. You are my eternal treasure. Lord, I hug you to my bosom. I see You shining in my heart. It is You who breathe in me, see through my eyes, hear through my ears. I am nothing without You. I merge my little personality into Your universal personality... Let Your love devour me. Surrender, Ranganatha, Surrender!"

Alavandar lived in the Real, leaving his crown and sceptre to a successor. He settled down in Srirangam and spent his days in the study, meditation, Japa, Sādhana and holy company of the Divya Prabandham. He wrote a treatise on qualified monism explaining the relation between Chit and Achit and God. Alavandar was a great champion of Vaishnavism. He lived what he preached and wrote. He had many disciples. The community held him in high reverence.

Old age and its infirmities now came upon him. Yet he never neglected his holy duty. He always remembered God. When he opened his mouth it was to glorify him and expound His Truth. When he did anything, it was to serve Ranganatha. When he moved with anyone, it was with a holyman. When he studied any book, it was either the *Gītā*, the Upaniṣad, the Brahmasūtra or the Divya Prabandham of the Alvars. He aspired to write able commentaries upon these works.

But his days were numbered. The doors of the senses were closed. Limbs could not move. Life was taking leave of its temporary residence. At that time he thought of Rāmānuja. "He is my true spiritual son, he who has to hold the banner of Vaishnavism after me. Kindly bring him from Śri Kanchi." Thus spoke Alavandar as he was struggling with death. A messenger hied to Kanchipuram. Śri Rāmānuja hurried to meet him; but alas! death was quicker than his steps. The Saint Alavandar had breathed his last before Rāmānuja came. Rāmānuja prostrated before his body three times, shed tears at his feet and

watched him reverentially. Three right hand fingers of the saint were folded. Rāmānuja imagined the meaning. He knew from the disciples nearby the Master's three aspirations. Rāmānuja in a prayerful attitude said: "My master, as your humble servant, I shall try my best to fulfil Your three wishes. I shall write commentaries on the *Brahmasūtra*, the *Gītā* and the *Upaniṣads* which form the basis of our philosophy. I shall see

that a commentary on the *Sahasranāma* is written. As he said thus the fingers straightened.

Rāmānuja after a brief home-life took to sannyāsa, consecrated himself to the service of the Alvars and of God. He wrote the promised commentaries.

The Bhakti-mārga of the Alvars was recorded by Nathamuni, lived by Alavandar and brought to light and propagated everywhere by Rāmānuja.

The Basic Lines of Ancient Indian Ethics, Economics and Politics*—I

BY JAYENDRARAY BHAGWANLAL DURKAL, M.A.

INTRODUCTORY

Utility of the Theme Indian ideals represent, if I may be allowed to say so the quintessence of Asiatic thought and the spirit of the East, which as is well-known has sent the light of the prophets throughout the world. Those ideals, further, have been the rules of life of the Nation which has lived from the dawn of human history even to these times and whose vitality and genius have been known to the world at large through personalities like Tagore and Gandhi, Ranjitsingh and Radhakrishnan. The ideals carry with them the testimony of time, the logic of longevity, which is not a negligible factor in this age when Nations are in the melting pot.

The difficulty of understanding the Indian perspective arises from the fact that the Indian system is a very complex one. It is a system as huge and complicated as the wide world, which it was intended to cover, and equally consistent, organic and perfect in design. If we once realize the Basic Lines, the understanding of the whole upper structure becomes not only an easy job but even a pleasure. The caste-system, the practice of Suttee, the prevailing asceticism, the Khaddar cult, the pre-puberty marriages, the injunctions for contactual purity and the innate conservatism of the people are all illumined by these basic lines. But it is still more interesting that these lines of

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light are very near or just parallel to those of the early heritage even of the great continent of Europe and it is so, I think, because all mankind was initially but one family.

The subject is, indeed, vast, but I do not propose to go much further than the basic lines which are as it were the key-

Scope of the Inquiry
the open sesame to the whole Indian system of life and letters. I have further chosen to confine myself to the ancient period of Indian thought from which the thought-currents of Modern India have been flowing, diluted, tinged or mixed, they may be, with the other thought-streams of the world today. My main authorities for these researches are the earliest Sacred Books of India, viz., the Vedas, the Smṛtis, the Purāṇas, the Itihāsas, the Tantras and cognate Sastric literature. I do not, however, propose to trouble the reader with technical details and original quotations which may make my thesis more exact and erudite but less interesting.

My personal apology for retailing a subject which has been

The Method of Approach
already rehearsed by so many scholars and savants of Europe and Asia is not only that it is a subject of perennial interest, not only that it has a living utility for the world today but also that every mind is a new camera with its own focus, its machine, its own resting tripod and its own fresh perspective and that its photoprints may in a Symposium of Letters serve to be links for understanding the Complex Whole. As regards the method I prefer to approach the authorities from whom we draw our inferences and information

with the spirit and respect of a student rather than the spirit of an overlord to whom his likings are measures of Truth. I should approach these ancient treasures less as a critic than as a reverential inquirer and when I perceive that no reliable data are available for sitting in adverse judgment upon them, when I observe that their language and contents are of hoary antiquity and yet of wonderful perfection and structure, when I see that the ideals of Truth, Charity, Austerity and Purity set forth therein, are the solaces of our homes and hearths, when I realize with the humility of the scientists that the world of nescience is infinite, when I hear that the new scientific vision is bringing more and more evidence in their favour, I feel that there is some justification for this attitude of greater confidence in the reliability of those authorities. I may submit a relevant instance of this method of approach. The texts expressly state that the *Mahābhārata*—the great epic—was written about five thousand years ago, while *Rāmāyaṇa*—the other great epic—was written in the Treta Age, i.e., more than nine hundred thousand years ago. Now leaving aside unconvincing though apt generalizations from language and style which are easily explainable on other theories, if we take these texts with a greater trust it would be easier to understand how in the *Rāmāyaṇa* about nine hundred milleniums before, mankind was so very different from what we can conveniently imagine. The Purāṇas especially relate, ostensibly and avowedly, tales of bygone ages—even of millions of years before and now that science is certifying that mankind must

be living for millions of years, we need not be unwilling to have peeps into the past only because it seems so strange and unbelievable. We have in these sanctified books conserved the choicest material of the panorama of History. It may be derived from Yogic powers, from Nature's Radiogram or from oral tradition. We are today alive to the fact that the mind is a powerful machine, a wonderful receiver as well as a transmitter.

The great value of the Indian systems of Ethics, Economics and Politics arises from the fact that they have stood the test of the great touchstones of Time, Nature and Conscience. But a greater tribute to them is that they have eminently stood the test of Reason. Firstly, they have stood the test of time. The Aryans, or the Hindus, as they are now called, are the earliest living Nation on the earth's surface keeping to its old ideals, practices and institutions right up to the present. They have stood the test of Nature. These have answered the needs of all temperaments, tribes and races which have all thriven and lived under these ancient systems. They have further stood the test of Conscience. These systems have developed the noblest conscience under them which has reflected itself in the purity of the Indian Home, the simplicity of Indian Life and the Politics of India which has evolved the new technique of Non-violent Non-co-operation. The systems, as I said, have also stood the test of Reason. Numerous intellectuals in India have found in these systems such wonderful logicality and sweet reason-

ableness as have received their unqualified homage. It is well-known how deep and comprehensive are the Laws of Manu and Yājñavalkya. The Sanskrit language has been a veritable pointer to the Science of Philology. The recluse Sannyāsi is worshipped and respected in India even today. The unsophisticated Indian woman even today believes in the virtues of purity and rectitude. The family life has not yet lost its sweetness, self-sacrifice and grace in many parts of India. Kings are still revered in India and looked up to as the Mābāp (parents) of the people and they even today reciprocate the sentiment with equally cordial spirit of service and sacrifice. The Indian system has thus a unique value, being the most long-lived and in tune with nature, conscience and reason. We may now pass on to consider what were the basic principles of the system which has exhibited such a wonderful tenacity in the history of the human race and has exercised such a fascination on the human mind. The devout Indians make no claim to credit for its value and regard the system as the one originally revealed by God for man and hence everlasting or Sanātana ever-so-good and immeasurably wonderful. Man's divine Maker gave him the light to give the initial guidance—the Major Premise to his Reason. Philosophic students are well aware that no Major Premise can be proved, except by omniscience.

BASIC LINES OF ETHICS

All social sciences anticipate a philosophic basis and ethics none the less so. We have already referred to the Indian philosophical thought, regarding

the Universe as an 'illusion not true in the absolute sense because it is changeable and destructible.' The perceiving Soul is the unchallengeable reality. This soul is really infinite and imperishable. Its nature is Life, Vitality and Joy. It is the illusion of this world which makes it feel unhappy. The mind and the intellect are its appertinances. Neither the mind nor the intellect is the Soul. The Upaniṣad says—"This Brahma (Spirit) is perfect: this (Manifestation) is perfect. From the Perfect the Perfect (Illusion) comes into being. From the Perfect, the Perfect being taken away, the Perfect remains."

The Soul being in essence perfect *desire* is a weakness. But does it not come natural? How do you explain it? This is the great riddle; and the ancient sage's reply to it was drawn from the Vedas. The spirit supreme is, indeed, perfect, and hence nothing can disturb its tranquil Joy. But this state of singleness without a variety is monotonous. It is the dales and valleys and the plateaus that bring the mountain into relief. It was this consciousness, of which we often find a counterpart in our souls, which made Him say or think: "I and one, May I be multifold; May I propagate." It was this basic momentum from which, say the Vedas, you may assume, the world came into being. Now this view of the origin of the Universe implies all our experience. We who are His manifestations have the same desire to find pleasure in the variety around us and the same norm for propagation. That is our nature because of the original impact that we have received. And the Upaniṣad says, "All this moving

Universe is pervaded by the presence of the Omnipotent. Enjoy that which has been left to thee by it. Do not snatch away anybody's possession." (*Īśāvāsyā*: I). A straight simple life is thus a corollary from the immanence of the spirit of which we, let us say for the time being, are the counterparts. "Attending to the right activities thou mayest desire to live", it says, "for a hundred years". The natural question is: What are the right activities and why take to them at all? The reply, is "On account of thy very nature, thou shalt want to do something." So let that something be such as may lead thee to Eternal peace and union with infinite joy. Were it not for the fact that owing to ignorance combined with natural desires we misbehave and draw upon us uneasiness, misery or darkness we would not have had to undergo any disciplinary measure at all! We have to guide ourselves against our own mischief-making tendencies and hence we need the light of guidance. This guidance is supplied by God in His Divine grace and His love unto the individual Soul by revealing unto him the Law of Religion. Suppose, we say, the soul goes on its natural desires and tendencies: what then? Well, if you go on that way here, you go on to "the regions of envy and strife and darkness". If you feel you have had enough and to spare of this world, if you feel satiated with its experiences and want a nobler, purer and happier condition, then go by the way of religion. "There is really no inherent sin", says Manu, "in flesh, wine or woman. Men are inclined to them naturally but it is the way of Cessation from them that achieves the great ends." Is it not scientific, social

and practical truth as well? Truths of great moment are hidden in the sacred books of India by riddles to put the undeserving natures out of scent. But the great value of the Indian Sacred Books is caught by their perfect exposure of truth and all truth. They do not mince matters. They do not lay down rules with a wink in the eye. They do not play hide and seek. My statement will readily come home to those who have studied those works in their entirety. They are indeed a vast ocean but it is an Ocean of Light. We have thus seen that the fundamental ethics of the Upaniṣads lead us to the principle of the *reduction of activity* ultimately to zero: firstly, because the perfect Soul has nothing worth desiring; and secondly because nothing can really satisfy that infinite Soul in this evanescent, transient and changing world. His best attitude is to witness it as a Talkie film realizing all the while that it is a play, projected from the Heaven. "This worldly existence", says the *Gītā* as well as the Upaniṣads, "is a temporary unanalysable tree that has its roots high up and its branches here below; its foliage are the Chhandas—the Vedas."

All morality therefore is essentially negative. It restricts you,

Morality
in essence nega-
tive stops you or dissuades you from certain acts that may lead you down deeper into the quagmire. Even the Golden Rule of the Indian Gospel as also of the Christian has a fundamentally negative use, i. e. Do not do unto others as you would not be done by. The positive expression is rather to remind us of the negative need. Let us take another in-

stance. Injunctions of marriage serve a double purpose. They implement the natural craving or desire; because it would be impracticable to deny it. But at the same time they limit its scope. I have been often wondering whether our Communist friends have realized the shrewd insight of our great forefathers who instituted the Institution of Marriage to eke out maximum happiness from an animal normality, which seeks promiscuous relationship. It is the limitation and all the self-discipline it implies, it is the sense of mutual fidelity until death, it is the purity of love flowing from religious duty, it is the privilege of *mine-ness* if I may coin the word, that ennobles this animal normality into the pleasure of life and the solace of death beyond the dream of promiscuous connections. We must concede that there are *failures* in marriage as there are failures in examinations but they will ultimately be found to be due to want of proper work over the *text*.

The great moral injunction for non-

Non-hurt to
living beings hurt to all living creatures which is often positively interpreted as charity or pity

is also of the same character, dissuading us from hurting other souls who are our counterparts or more correctly, our reflections. Talk of peace and goodwill would be merely diplomacy towards ends of self-interest without the realization of the immanence of God in the whole of the Universe; and this immanence and continuity of the Soul is realized in nothing more than the satisfaction we find for ourselves in the satisfaction of others and the inner uneasiness we feel in making others uneasy. Flesh diet is also

to be avoided, for it implies a war on birds and beasts.

Purity is another of the four great pillars of morality, viz., *All-sided purity of life* Truth, Charity, Austerity and

Purity which we have already referred to. We need further remark that there is a gradation in purity as there is a gradation in all qualities. There are degrees, positive, comparative and superlative—good, better and best even there. This purity also is analysable ultimately into a negative implication—cessation from bad contact. In fact Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavadgītā* lays down that *contact* itself is the source of mischief and ultimate deliverance from it is desirable. For, the contact brings in the desire, the desire creates passions and passions put the soul out of balance and out of peace.

The basic line of morals that we

Not a line of inaction have here presented is not the line of inaction; for, the genius of the ancients could envisage its unnaturalness and impracticability. It is the line of *less* action. And even at this height of our activities do we not want such a teaching? We say, reduce armaments, reduce taxes, reduce wars, reduce government interference. We are also asked to reduce over-production and hours of labour and to reduce births as well as deaths. Reduction is the cry all round. From another point of view, all life is an expenditure of energy and conservation of energy means conservation of life.

As a natural deduction of such a

The Method of contraries or method of drops negative theory of morals we find that the method of contraries is extensively

used in the Hindu ethical injunctions. When the foundation for the young boy's mentality is to be laid in his years of education he is enjoined to forego absolutely the company of woman. When the mind is formed he is asked, nay, enjoined to go home and marry. Then further on after he has continued the line of his ancestors and grown old he is enjoined to renounce his home and family. We find this Method of Drop, as one proceeds, usually occurring in the sacred injunctions of the Hindus. The Kṣatriya-warrior, for instance, is enjoined to fight valiantly in war, the Brahman is normally enjoined not to use weapons or fight in the battle at all. We find that the sage Viśwamitra who could smash the Rakṣasas or demons in a moment did not do it himself. He called in the aid of Rāma, the Kṣatriya warrior, to do the work for him. This differentiation added to the traits of heredity, brought about the permanence of character and characteristics for which India is not only notable but has been a veritable laboratory and museum of millenniums of social, psychic and hereditary experiments.

This brings us to the other great and important principle in

Propriety of prescription by groups Indian ethics, viz., propriety of prescription. The Indian sages never lost sight of the

fact that men are unequal on almost all counts; unequal in their natural as well as acquired qualities, abilities and propensities. When this is realized a few rules of morals for all become too much like copy-book morality, and are soon left out of count. From the Indian point of view every man is on a different scale of moral ladder, and moral progress

is a science and an art which is as extensive, deep and intricate as the minds with which it is concerned. The caste-system of grouping is therefore consolidated on religio-moral standards to concentrate similar strata and achieve best results by mutual contacts and co-operation. Thus we have a variety in moral injunctions though a unity in principle.

The theological aspect
The ethical position that we have taken up may be further elucidated by an illustration.

Let us imagine a vast circle of activity that the Universe practically is. The centre is God or Supreme Being. The human monads are moving in that circle. There are centripetal forces and centrifugal forces; the former take the monad towards the centre, the latter take it away from the centre. There are other rotatory forces which make him rotate in the same circumference. These are neutral forces of the world. Those forces that take man towards the centre are ethically desirable forces. Those of the opposite kind are undesirable forces. This is a very convenient line of settling which is which by one's own self. But it posits the supreme Spirit which is a difficult pill to swallow for people who are trained to be godless. The same forces may be otherwise stated as forces of conservation and forces of dissipation. Man is almost midway. He is an organism ordinarily dissipating itself. Culture, morals and religions are forces of conservation leading him towards the great object of his life. So the R̄ṣis of old laid down a general dictum of control of all activities. "Control thy speech", says the sacred Purāṇa, "control thy

mind, control thy breath, control thy senses, control thyself by thy self, and thou shalt not be looked again for the journey of birth and death." (*Bhāgavata*). This means a purer life whose great instrument is austerity. "Austerity", says Manu, "is the beginning, it is the middle, it is the end". It is the highest law of progressive life. It is the quality of self-denial and remains one of the noblest virtues even today. Lenin gave up the luxuries of the table, the British King gave up the splendour of sovereignty and the Feurer has forgone the joys of family life.

The reliable foundation of Ethics
This brings us to another point about morals, viz., are there any fundamental morals, or morality is only relative?

That it is relative in a sense we have already noted. But if we go deeper in the problem it reduces itself to the question "Who can set the moral standard". The Indian view in this matter is that man's intellect, knowledge and materials are entirely limited and he is liable to err. The Omniscient only therefore can lay down the moral truths and moral standards. Religion alone therefore is the source and determinant of moral values. They cannot and do not depend upon oscillating human opinion. Otherwise they stand self-condemned. A direct corollary from this position is that social planning which involves moral values cannot be properly done by a secular state. The social planning is done by religion. No other morality, no other planning is reliable in the Indian view of life. What religion or revelation to believe in, is a matter of man's own concern. It may

be by mere faith or by reasoned conviction, but that is the guide *par excellence*. Morality may not be absolute, but it must be reliable and its reliability springs from its revealed character.

The ancient Aryans laid special stress, like the modern *Scruples about foods, drinks and contacts* scientists, on insulation and purity in the matter of diet and drinks and contacts as well as in the relations of the sexes. They have been very particular in these matters, because their maxims were: "As is the Food so is the Intellect", "As is the Seed so is the Fruit". The foods and drinks, apart from their qualities, partook, according to them, of the influences of those with whom they came into contact. We are not sure whether they anticipated the germ-theory but they were perhaps alive to the psychic effects of physical contacts. The basic line they followed for the purity of sex was peculiar and effective. Man was dealt with in a natural way by the R̄sis of India. They realized that man was man after all. He had his hunger and thirst, physical as well as social, sexual, and spiritual. He could not be denied his longings *in toto*. He was to *reduce*

them; that was one thing. He was to direct them in healthy channels, that was another. But they also knew the dangers and pitfalls of keeping him hungry for long and tantalizing him. This is the key to the custom of pre-puberty marriage in India, which has come in for a good deal of trenchant criticism. It also accounts for the allowance made for polygamy amongst the princely classes and in certain cases. The ideal of purity is shown in its excelsis in the anecdote of Paraśurāma—an incarnation of Viṣṇu—slaying his dear mother Reṇukā at the bidding of his father, sage Jamadagni, for having lustfully eyed a prince, and in the historical incident of princess Padminī embracing the funeral pyre at the signal of death of the brave Rajputs who were fighting to protect her from the Moslem invaders. This intense feeling for purity was reflected in all walks of life. In fact, we find the same "natural dislike of material defilement elevated into religious sentiment" in ancient Indian faith as in Judaism. The result of this strong attitude for mental and physical purity has been abundantly clear in the social experiments of Indian life.

(To be continued)



The Kalyana-Kalpataru ✸



The Divine Enchanter

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवाबशिष्यते ॥



KRISHNA KALPĀTRU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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वन्दे नवघनश्यामं पीतकौशेयवाससम् ।
सानन्दं सुन्दरं शुद्धं श्रीकृष्णं प्रकृतेः परम् ॥

(*Sri Nārada Pāñcharātra*)

Obeisance to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose colour is as blue
as a newly formed cloud, who wears a yellow garment of
silk, who is the embodiment of Bliss, Beauty and Purity
and ever exists beyond the realm of Prakṛti.



Dialogue With The Lord During Meditation—II

(Continued from the previous number)

BY JAYADAYAL GOVANDKA

P. O Lord, now please tell me when You will grant me Your direct vision.

L. Why do you worry over this? I shall do so what time appears quite appropriate to me. When the time arrives the physician himself prescribes regular diet for the patient. The patient should completely depend on the physician for this.

P. I admit it. But when the patient feels hungry, he goes on repeating, "When shall I get my regular diet?" He who is afflicted with a strong hunger cannot but go on asking for food.

L. The physician knows whether the hunger of the patient is true or false. If he refrains from prescribing food even when the patient feels a strong hunger, the restraint is all for the patient's good.

P. This is so, I admit; but I do not understand what good may underlie Your withholding divine vision from a practicant. I see good involved only in Your granting him the vision. Inappropriate food may bring harm to a patient but Your vision may never bring any harm; on the contrary, it brings supreme good; therefore, Your realization cannot be compared to the diet of a patient.

L. The physician prescribes in proper time the diet which he feels will contribute to the gradual recovery of

the patient. In this matter the patient has to depend on the judgment of the physician. The physician allows solid food to the patient when he thinks the latter's true hunger is awakened, and this brings no harm to the patient. Though My realization brings supreme good, yet this is not possible without the awakening of true hunger in the form of development of full Love and Faith in me.

P. There is great deficiency in me so far as Love and Faith are concerned, and I consider it very hard to remove this defect. Therefore, Your vision is certainly most difficult, if not impossible in my case.

L. It is an error on your part to hold this view. The vision is delayed because of this view.

P. What can I do other than hold this view? Why should I not hold it? Divine vision is impossible without full Faith and Love, and I find myself wholly deficient in both these respects.

L. Can this deficiency not be removed?

P. It may be; but if the rate of progress is to be measured by what happened in the past, it is not possible for the deficiency to disappear in this life.

L. Why do you yourself put an obstacle in the way of your progress by holding this view? Can the work of a

hundred years not be accomplished in the course of a minute ?

P. Yes, everything is possible through Your grace.

L. Then why did you come to the conclusion that the accomplishment was impossible in this very life ?

P. This was due to my foolishness, but now please have mercy on me, Lord, that I may soon develop full Faith in and exclusive Love for You.

L. Do I not want that you should develop this ? Do I put any obstacle in the way of this development ?

P. There can be no question of putting obstacle in this matter. You are no doubt rendering me the necessary aid and yet there is delay in my removing the deficiencies of Faith and Love. That is why I pray for Your grace.

L. That is all right. But in order to remove the deficiencies of Faith and Love you should rely on Me and make the best possible effort.

P. O Lord, I have heard it said that these deficiencies may be removed if one weeps before You. Is this a fact ?

L. That weeping is a different kind of weeping.

P. What type of weeping is that ? What is its character ?

L. That weeping proceeds from the heart even as a man in distress weeps sincerely from the heart for the removal of distress.

P. I understand. I wish I could weep like this, but it does not always proceed from the heart.

L. This shows that you seek it from the intellect, and not from the heart.

P. O Lord, if the heart begins to seek it, why should I pray to You ? I solicit Your aid because there is no seeking from the heart.

L. My aid can be gained when one is devoted to carrying out My instructions. Believe that the most difficult task can be easily accomplished when one is attentive to this.

P. Lord, I shall certainly do as You ask me to do, but the progress will assuredly depend on Your grace. I am only an instrument. Therefore, knowing this to be Your instruction I shall make a special effort to carry it out. As an instrument, please make me do, whatever You desire me to do.

L. Take care that this view may not lead you to self-deception.

P. O Lord, can there be any deception in asking for aid from You.

L. While seeking aid, if one avoids labour and trouble to the body, and does not carry out instructions, it means practice of deception. Fixing the mind on Me go on carrying out whatever I said. Do not contemplate on what happened in the past or will happen in future. Go on observing whatever comes to pass as a disinterested observer. This is what is called practice of surrender. Believe that everything is possible of attainment through the practice of this form of surrender.

P. I have faith in this, but agitation caused by distress makes me forget it and the attention is automatically

dragged to the goal of attainment of supreme peace and supreme bliss.

L. Why not devote your attention exclusively to the work itself, as you devote it to the fruit of action? When My instructions are sincerely carried out, it leads to the growth of Faith and Love and ultimately to My realization.

P. But, O Lord, without the growth of Faith and Love in You even the carrying out of Your instructions does not become possible.

L. You already possess the amount of Faith and Love necessary for carrying out My instructions.

P. Then, why do I fail to carry out Your instructions to the letter?

L. Stored up impressions of past sins, wordly love, hatred, lust, anger and similar other evils act as obstacles.

P. How are these to be annihilated?

L. I have already said that these are annihilated by practices like, Bhajana, meditation, selfless service and Satsanga.

P. I shall try to make special effort to devote myself to these practices. But success in this also will depend on Your grace.

L. You may get any amount of aid you may seek from Me.

* * * *

P. O Lord, some people say that the vision of God is gained only through the eyes of Knowledge and not through physical eyes. What is the truth about this?

L. What they say is not correct. In the manner a devotee wants to see Me, I can manifest Myself before him.

P. Your form being Divine, how is it possible for the physical eyes to see the same?

L. Through My grace. I give him such power with the aid of which he can see My Divine form even with the physical eyes.

P. When You manifest Your Divine form, do all the people present at the place gain Your sight, or only a select few among them?

L. It may happen, as I desire it to happen.

P. Physical sight is equally possessed by all, then how does it happen that some people see You, and others do not?

L. There is nothing to wonder in this. Through the application of Yogic power even a Yogi can act like this. Though present before a multitude, he may be actually seen by some, and not by others.

P. When You appear before a crowd of people, do all men in the crowd see You as possessing the same form, or You appear differently before different persons?

L. I can appear both as possessing the same form, as well as in different forms before different persons. This happens according to the qualification of the observer. In other words, whatever the thoughts of the devotee, or the character of his Love and Faith, I appear so before him.

P. How do observers remain deficient in faith even when You are directly manifested before them? Please explain this with illustration.

L. I can manifest Myself before a multitude though the people comprising

it may be deficient in faith, or may even lack the same. And when I am manifested, people may look upon Me some with more Faith and some with less. This is illustrated by My manifestation in Universal Form in the court of Duryodhana, where I was seen by people according to their thoughts and sentiments and many people could not even see Me.

P. When You appear on earth as an incarnation, people must see You as possessing a form which is same to all.

L. At the time of incarnation also, I appear to people according to the nature of their thought.*

P. Some people say that God, who is the embodiment of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss cannot manifest Himself before a devotee assuming a definite Form. The devotees see their own thoughts reflected in the Form of their respective deities.

L. They say so out of error. They do not know the secret of my Form with attributes. Although I am Myself embodiment of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, through my own Yogic power I manifest Myself in My Divine Form with attributes for the sake of My devotees. Some practicants may no doubt in the course of their practice imagine that they have seen Me through the projection of their mental picture, but that is not regarded as genuine Divine vision.

* जाकी रही भावना जैसी । प्रभु मूरति देखा तिन तेसी ॥

"Whatever was the conception of the person, the Lord's Form appeared so to him."

P. How is a practicant to understand whether his vision is genuine, or a mere projection of his mental picture?

L. There is a world of difference between direct Divine vision and a mental conception. When a practicant directly realizes Me, he will develop all the marks of a devotee, and whatever incidents happen at the time will leave their proofs, such as when Dhruva realized Me he attained all knowledge of the scriptures as soon as his chin was touched with the conch, and when I revealed Myself for the sake of Prahlāda, I destroyed Hiranyakaśipu. These incidents can never be considered as mere imaginations. But when there is a realization of My form only through the imagination the incidents connected therewith will leave no proofs.

P. Some say that God being all-pervading, how is it possible for Him to reveal Himself in a particular point of space? Does not such manifestation refute His all-pervading character?

L. No, it does not. Fire is all-pervading, and yet a person desiring it lights it either at one place or in many places, as the case may be, and the god of Fire without losing his all-pervading character, manifests himself at one particular place or in many places. My pervasiveness is deeper and My power infinitely stronger than that of Fire. Where is, then, any cause for wonder if I, the all-pervading Being, while remaining present everywhere, manifest Myself with all my power intact at one place, or simultaneously in many places?

P. While You are absolute and Formless, how do You appear assuming a Divine Form with attributes?

L. No, they do not. Whatever character they show at the time of their spiritual practice, they generally maintain even after realization. The common factor is that there is a total absence of modifications like joy and grief, attraction and repulsion, lust and anger, etc., among them. Qualifications like equanimity, peace and bliss are found equally among them, and they never do anything in contravention of the injunctions of the scriptures. Though all their activities follow the lines laid down by Me (in the scriptures), they are all the same different in every individual case.

P. What is the reason for this difference in their external activities?

L. Some possess the nature of doing spiritual practice in retirement and some of doing service. These external activities differ according to the differences of nature, pre-determined Karma and intellect of the devotees, as well as differences of place, time and circumstances.

P. In that case, he is the best among them to whom You may grant the full privilege.

L. Use of comparision is out of place here. All of them are best. He who is by nature inclined towards activities is specially entrusted with the responsibility to work.

P. All should feel an equal enthusiasm in carrying out a work enjoined by You.

L. It is true that all of them feel an equal enthusiasm in carrying out my work, but I distribute the work according to their nature. There are some who love to remain constantly by My side, I, therefore, do not send them out. I entrust him with service of the people who is inclined to that form of service. One who is inclined to the life of a recluse, I generally do not entrust with any work. I distribute the work according to the nature and capacity of the devotee.

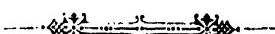
P. The devotee should develop the nature that You may entrust any special work to him without any hesitation. What are the best means of developing this nature?

L. Complete and wholehearted surrender to Me alone.

P. Kindly explain for our benefit what is meant by complete surrender?

L. Constant remembrance of, and meditation on, My Name and Form with consciousness of their virtues and power, carrying out of My instructions for My pleasure without break in remembrance and remaining ever happy in My dispensation. (*Kalyan*)

(To be continued)



Means of Safety in the Present World-Crisis

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

The ways of God are quite unique and inscrutable. None can definitely foretell what the Lord will arrange to do at the very next moment. But this much is certain that whatever He does leads only to good, whether from the outside the action itself appears nice or most terrible. The present World-War also is nothing but an Act of the drama staged by the Lord. It is extremely terrible to look. Fire is raining on all sides on land, water and in the skies. Man, his possessions, the precious things gathered through centuries of hard labour and populated cities—all are being destroyed without any remorse or compunction. Innocent children as well as women are becoming victims of death in this war. Crores of tons of sea-going vessels have gone down into the pit of the ocean and more are going down every day. The application of poisonous gas yet remains up in the sleeves of both the adversaries. The film unrolled presents a ghastly, awe-inspiring sight. It appears that God has actually manifested Himself in the form of Kāla (Time) and is engaged in devouring everything by covering them all with innumerable tongues of flame and reducing them into pulp under His fearful jaws. Even at the time of the Mahābhārata War, the Lord said:—

"I am the magnified Kāla (Time), that is the destroyer of the worlds. My purpose here is to destroy these people."

(Gītā XI. 32)

The difference is only this that at that time it was a war of right against wrong, of justice against injustice, of the Pāñdavas endowed with the divine qualities against the Kauravas possessed of the demoniac qualities; that is why God having incarnated Himself helped the Pāñdavas fighting for righteousness and justice. That is how the virtuous Pāñdavas attained victory. The present war is not being waged as between virtue and vice, justice and injustice, divine and demoniac forces; it is a sinful, atrocious war between extremely powerful Asuric powers proud of their conquest of Matter, which will reach its final conclusion through the destruction of both the adversaries. Both the sides strongly affirm that they are fighting a righteous war with the object of establishing universal peace through the removal and utter destruction of all forms of injustice, racial domination, exploitation of weaker races and consequent unrest throughout the world; but the wonder is that in their methods of fight both take recourse to wrong, untruth and impropriety of conduct without any hesitation. No side exhibits any scruple to adopt the most malevolent means to gain the object in view. If the German and Italian followers of Nazi Hitler and Fascist Mussolini are sinister, the American and British followers of the two leaders of Democracy, Roosevelt and Churchill, are no better judged from the same standard. If the Nazis persecute

the Jews and wrest the liberty of innocent people, are not Americans, who treat the good-natured Negroes as beasts, and the British, who have wrongly kept India under fetters, tarred with the same brush? It is another matter whether the degrees of evil are more or less, or the methods applied for securing racial domination are different. That is why the Divine Sport has manifested itself in the form of this war. To me it appears as nothing but a major operation on the body politic of the world, which was most necessary for its good and which will continue till the body politic is restored to health through the total removal of all putrid matter. God is, indeed, an expert surgeon; His knife manifested now as magnified Time (Kāla) will not be closed till all the impurities formed in the body are removed. If signs of peace appear in the middle, they will be nothing but temporary respites for sharpening the knife, which will then function with even greater vigour for the removal of the residue of impurities.

The arena already filled up by Germany, Britain, Russia and Italy has been entered by cunning and clever Japan on the one hand, and America intoxicated by the power of gold, on the other. There are people who say that instead of entering the war as an adversary, President Roosevelt would have done better to act as a powerful intermediary for the establishment of universal peace, and save the world from a further blood-bath. But how could he do so? If he had done so, what would have been the means of destroying America's man power and material resources? Should not impurities accumulated in any parti-

cular part of the body go? As a matter of fact, Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo are nothing but instruments, they have been engaged to take up the role of leaders of the two contending parties in this climax of the Tragedy enacted on the stage of the world. Whatever God decides to get done that alone comes to pass. These leaders instead of regarding themselves as actors on the stage consider themselves to be masters of the situation. That is another aspect of the tragedy which makes this war an unrighteous war. In this law governed universe of God, nothing happens which is accidental or unregulated by law. What is happening today was bound to happen or was indispensable for the good of the world. These leaders are being used as instruments to serve that purpose. The *Gītā*, which the Lord revealed during the righteous Mahābhārata War, contains the following saying from His lips:—

"These warriors are already slain by Me; be you only an instrument, O Arjuna."

(*Gītā* XI. 33)

It may be asked that men are forced by their Karma to enter the jaws of death, but what could be the reason for the indiscriminate destruction of innumerable buildings, large industrial plants, factories, museums, rare art-collections, libraries, laboratories, churches and hospitals? What purpose of God is actually served by such wholesale destruction? To tell the truth, God's purpose is known to God alone, but this much is clear to us that everything created by man has a deep and inseparable relation with him, with his thoughts and sentiments. Just as a

person may be possessed of either divine or demoniac qualities, even so things created or possessed by him may be either divine or demoniac. Wealth amassed by righteous means is not tainted wealth, but when it is earned by theft, plunder, deception and fraud, it becomes tainted and anything created by that wealth gets similarly tainted. Discrepancies in the effects of good and evil deeds are unavoidable. Under the influence of his Karma a man may be rich and another poor, but when a man of wealth either cherishes no hatred for the poor, or does not oppress the weak, when he uses his wealth in the service of others without any sense of pride and without the intention of placing others under obligation, his wealth is a blessing. That wealth is nobody's personal property. It belongs to God and renders good to all even as the water drawn from the ocean by the sun's rays is returned to the earth according to the earth's needs in the form of rain and shower and does good to all. He who accumulates or distributes that wealth does not feel himself to be its master, but regards himself to be an honest trustee engaged in gathering wealth scattered among the people and distributing the same according to method for the good of those very people. But there is another kind of wealth earned through oppression and exploitation of the weak and the poor; wealth which creates huge palatial buildings and brings to its owner possession of cars, aeroplanes, elephants, horses, earthly power and innumerable objects of personal enjoyment; wealth which he uses for accumulating more and more objects of enjoyment through oppression

of the poor and total neglect of their interest; wealth which makes its owner callous to the sight of humanity going naked for want of cloth and yearning for food and water, which makes its owner chase a beggar like a pariah dog. This is tainted wealth which is sure to produce putrefaction. Being ill-gotten, it is poisonous itself and infects with poison whatever is produced by it. Art-collections, libraries, laboratories, etc., also may be forms of contaminated matter if they are created by ill-gotten money as expressions of national pride and glory, or for the purpose of lowering others in the eye of the world. Men in the present age filled with demoniac powers have got intoxicated with their pride and passion. The Lord has drawn a nice, clear-cut picture in the *Gītā* of these men of demoniac nature. Such a man puffed up with pride of wealth, authority, science, arts and mechanical dexterity and regarding himself as successful in life, and advanced in the scale of civilization, says:—

"This has been won by me today; I shall gratify this desire. I have this money, this will be mine again. This enemy has been killed by me; I shall kill others also; I am the lord and enjoyer: I am perfect, mighty and happy. I am very wealthy, and of high pedigree. Who is equal to me? I shall perform sacrifice, give and rejoice all my life."

(*Gītā* XVI. 13–15)

These types of Asuric ideas are being broadcast nowadays through the pronouncements and speeches of great national leaders, dictators, super-ministers, generals and propagandists of both the adversaries. Institutions established,

nourished and fostered by society of men possessed of these demoniac sentiments are likely to be thrown away as part of putrid matter in the course of the surgical operation performed by God. It is true that the Lord, who is the embodiment of sweetness, does not seek the destruction of things of beauty, but it is good to throw away a sweet dish mixed up with poison. Ignorant of their true character, we feel upset at the destruction of these things; their external glamour invest them with an artificial value in our eyes. That is why we regard their destruction as a very great loss. But in the eye of omniscient, all-governing God, they possess no importance or value whatsoever. Neither does he feel any sorrow in their destruction. Though as a matter of fact, the inconceivable and sportive Lord remains always beyond pleasure and pain, yet He has arranged this fearful drama of destruction in the present worn out world for the world's good and for ushering a new beautiful creation. Why should he feel sorry for this? He is now performing the function of a loving mother, who holds tight a weeping child suffering from an abscess for a surgical operation, and when the operation is over, changes the child's blood-stained cloth for a new fine raiment. The good of the world lies in this destruction; that is why it is taking place.

'How long will this war continue', 'who will win', 'what will be its effect on the world', 'how will it affect India', 'what are the dangers we are likely to face', 'how will the rich protect their riches', 'what should we do under the present circumstance', 'in what lies our

good'—these and many similar questions are being asked by friends every now and then. Though according to my understanding there is only one answer to these questions, *viz.*, that with faith in Divine grace, and observing the sports of the Lord as spectators, we should go on constantly remembering Him, which when done we shall in course of time automatically come to know the truth about these things, and good and nothing but unmitigated good will come to us,—yet because of the importunities of some friends an attempt is being made below to supply them with detailed answers according to my humble light.

1. 'How long will the war continue?' The answer to this has been already given above. So long as the surgical operation is not concluded, it will continue. From an examination of the relative strength of both the contending parties it appears likely to continue for a year, or a year and a half more.

2. 'Who will win?' The answer to this also has been covered above. This war is, in fact, a war of wholesale destruction. The winning side will consider itself to have won after losing its all, whereas the losing side will lose everything as a matter of course. It is not being fought for either victory or defeat, but for total and indiscriminate destruction. When the German Army makes an advance in Russia, it does behind a barrage of fire and lead, which reduces both small hamlets and huge populous cities into ruins. True to their scorched earth policy, the Russians before they withdraw from a place reduce to ashes whatever may be of use to

the enemy. When the Russians counter-attack, the process of destruction is carried on by their concentrated artillery fire, and the Germans, if they have to withdraw from a place, destroy it again with scientific thoroughness and precision. Hitler himself made a confession of this fact when he said that in the conquered parts of Russia, the German Army could not lay its hands on anything useful and occupied what might be termed veritable ruins. The same story is being repeated in the far East. In Malaya, Singapore, Burma, Dutch East Indies, Phillipines and the islands adjacent to Australia sacrifices on a liberal scale have been offered to the god of Fire. With regard to Java, it is said, that not only barracks, ports, factories, aerodromes, broadcasting stations, oil-pumps, shops and houses, but even bathing places, have been methodically reduced to ashes. The fire which burnt Rangoon could be seen in the sky, we were told, from a distance of forty miles or so. When the Allied nations counter-attack in these regions, as President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill assure us they will do, the same process of destruction will be repeated once again. If a conqueror fails to get anything of value even now in a conquered territory, what will remain there after the place has changed hands several times and is finally occupied by the victor? What is the guarantee that a nation in alliance now will not turn into an enemy, or the victor nations will not fight among themselves over the spoils of their victory?

The Rāksasa Nikumbha had two sons whose names were Sunda and

Upasunda. Both the brothers were extremely powerful, and both were devoted to each other. In physical beauty, virtues and strength they progressed at double rate in the course of a day and four times in the course of a night. When they came of age, they started severe austerities on the Vindhya-chala hill with the object of conquering the universe. They began to live on air and offered their own flesh as oblations to fire. Pleased with their austerities Brahmā gave them the boon of remaining unconquered by anybody else in the world. Their death would be possible, he said, if only they quarrelled with, and killed, each other. On the strength of this boon, the two brothers easily conquered the three worlds. Terrified at their strength the celestials ran helter and skelter to their hiding places. The Ṛsis and sages were remorselessly crushed. An uproar of distress was raised throughout the world. All things in the universe became their objects of enjoyment. The celestials and demons both began to groan under their heels. Unable to bear their atrocities any longer, they finally went to seek refuge with Brahmā. Then, under Brahmā's instruction Viswakarma created the girl Tilottama, who fascinated the three worlds by her charm and beauty. One day Tilottama came to Sunda and Upasunda; both the brothers at once got enchanted with her and began to quarrel for her. Finally, they started a fight and killed each other. This analogy may be correctly applied to the powers ranged on two sides in the present war. Detailed commentary is unnecessary. They would have remained unconquered if they had not started this mutual fight. Considering, however,

Russia's bravery, the huge expansion of the armament industry in America, and Britain's centuries-old experiences of diplomacy, great patience and indomitable courage, the Allied nations believe that notwithstanding the defeats suffered by them in the initial stages, the final victory will be theirs. But—

"What Gopāla ordains will come to pass—

None can erase what Nanda's Darling has written for the future."

3. 'What will be its effect on the world ?' The answer to this also has been already given. The effect will be what happens to the body when the accumulated pus is thrown out after a surgical operation. For some time, noble and uplifting thoughts will flourish in the world and there will be universal peace.

4. 'How will it affect India ?' To the extent putrefaction has spread in India, to that extent India also will have to offer her share of sacrifice in this great Yajña of Destruction. Who could imagine before that Calcutta would be like a deserted city, and there would be such a great crisis in the business of that city ? Indian soldiers are fighting in almost every battle-field of Asia. Money is being spent on a lavish scale without any restraint. Though there has been no failure in the yield of crops, there is a scarcity of foodstuffs all over the country which is causing distress to all. Indians settled in Malaya, Singapore, Burma, etc., have had to pass through terrible sufferings. These are all nothing but India's offering to the sacrifice. But this is only the beginning. If the people of India do not even now call out for

Divine aid and attempt thereby to divert the course of this terrible storm, they may have to pass through some more bitter experiences.

5. 'What are the dangers we are likely to face ?' The answer to this is that the real danger is within us, in our thoughts of fear. The soul never dies, and the body never endures. God's dispensation is unchangeable and free from evil. Worldly enjoyments and glory come and go, they are transient, then what should cause us fear ? The real fear is that we are feeling nervous. We have no faith in the immortality of the soul and God's dispensation. If we had faith, we would not have wasted time over the thoughts of what are happening, knowing that they are inevitable, and would have devoted ourselves to our immediate duties, would have attempted to perform honestly and to the best of our ability whatever work was present before us, with complete confidence in the benevolence of God. This is the real danger, though from the external point of view there are many other possibilities of dangers, some of which are being listed below—

- (a) Some major ports and cities of India may be subjected to bombing from the air.
- (b) Raids in, and invasion of, certain parts of the country is apprehended.
- (c) Shortage of coal, wagon and bogeys and dislocation of railway lines due to enemy action may stop the working of railways in certain parts of India, which may cause much inconvenience to the travelling public.

- (d) Failure of crops, transport difficulties and other causes may bring about extreme shortage of food-stuffs in parts of the country.
- (e) Theft, loot and plunder may become rampant.
- (f) Hindu Muslim riots, or riots between parties whose self-interest mutually clash, may break out here and there.
- (g) People running away out of fright may suffer much loss.
- (h) Plunder and abduction of women by the worst elements in the military may take place. There are other possibilities also in the discussion of which we need not enter now.

The first three items in the above list represent what generally takes place in every country during a war. But the fifth, sixth and seventh items represent problems which are unfortunately India's own. England and other countries have gone through terrible experiences of bombing from the air, but rarely there has been any fear in those countries of the situation being exploited for the looting of individual property by men of the country, or arson and riots breaking out among warring communities within the country. Here everyone broods on this fear, which is extremely deplorable. Similarly, when people run away out of fright without any organization, they necessarily suffer much loss.

The eighth item of fear is also peculiarly India's own. The reason for this is that we have developed an extreme fondness for life. As a matter

of fact, it is much better to lay down life by offering active opposition to a tyrant rather than endure his cruel tyranny. Indian women have attained fame in history by welcoming death with a smiling face in order to protect their honour and chastity. They can vanquish any tyrant by their spiritual power of chastity. Great celestials and even the god of Death used to be afraid of the Indian women extremely sensitive of their honour. They could reduce a tyrant to ashes by means of the power derived from their austerities. If the ideal of chastity is no longer upheld with the same amount of devotion, this much, however, may be expected that a woman whose honour is threatened will stop the tyrant by her desperate opposition to him. During that opposition she may attempt to defend herself by whatever means may appear handy to her. It may be remembered that the Hindu scriptures sanction even the murder of a desperado. While defining a desperado, the *Vaishista-Smṛti* says—

अग्निदो गरदशैव शब्दपर्णिषनापहः ।
क्षेत्रदारापहर्ता च पट्टे आततायिनः ॥

(III. 19)

"There are six classes of desperados, viz., (1) one who commits arson, (2) administers poison, (3) attacks with arms, (4) robs wealth, (5) attempts forcible occupation of land, and (6) abducts women."

With regard to these desperados, Lord Manu says—

आततायिनमायान्ते हन्यादेवाविचारयन् ।
नाततायिन्ये दोषे हन्तुर्भवति कश्चन ॥

(VIII. 350-51)

"The desperados should be killed without hesitation. He who kills a desperado commits no guilt."

When a woman is attacked by a desperado, men and women who may be present on the spot should all combine to protect her by any means they can even at the cost of their lives.

6. 'How will the rich protect their riches?' In connection with this question several other allied questions have been asked, viz., whether it was safe to keep money in the banks; if not should it be kept at home; should such money be kept in currency notes or in coins; was there any objection to change it into stocks of gold and silver, should any other commodity be stocked, etc.? Answer to these questions should be given according to each individual case, but as the number of questioners is large, an attempt is being made to give succinctly what appears to me their correct answer.

In my view the best means of protecting riches is to spend them for the service of the poor with the object of gaining God's pleasure. The best use of wealth lies in this, this is its true protection. Whatever part of wealth is spent in the noblest form of charity is really saved. The rest is bound to be destroyed in whatever manner it may be.

If there is any real political change, or a revolution breaks out in the country, there will be risk to money, whether preserved in banks or at home. In that case, circumstances are not likely to remain the same everywhere. If England wins the war and British authority in India is maintained, the value of currency notes and coins will remain unimpaired. In case of failure of Government protection, or the outbreak of a revolution, risk to gold and

silver being looted cannot be altogether ruled out. And on the establishment of peace there is every possibility of their value going down. Nevertheless those who are bent on keeping a stock will not be ill-advised to invest their money on silver. Moreover investments on cheaper commodities like cotton and mustard will also run less risk of facing a loss. In no case fear should be entertained in the mind. Wealth cannot be saved by entertaining fear. After careful examination of the surroundings in which one lives and of one's own individual circumstances proper measures should be adopted by all for self-defence in case of emergency in consultation with far-sighted well-wishers. The same measures cannot suit all.

7. 'What should we do under the present circumstance?' It is necessary to deal with this question with some amount of care. Although it is true that what is happening is nothing but what should happen under God's dispensation, yet if the house is on fire, or there is an attack on us by men of bad character or a body of robbers, we treat it as a danger and try to save ourselves from it, even so the present war should be treated as a terrible danger. All men of thought should try according to their power and capacity to get rid of this danger as early as possible, so that people may live in peace throughout the world. As the result of this terrible war there is bound to be widespread disorganization, spread of various forms of epidemics, extensive poverty and a general lack of self-possessed, brave and thoughtful men in the world. That is all the more reason why we should be vigilant and active.

In order to save ourselves from this terrible danger, we should adopt the following programme of work—

(a) We should send out thought-currents from the bottom of our hearts that all living beings on earth may attain peace and bliss, that all may attain good, that all may be possessed of good thoughts, and that all may develop themselves into devotees of God.

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कष्टिद् दुःखभाग् भवेत् ॥

"Let all be happy and free from ailments, let all see good and nothing but good about them, let none suffer the least sorrow."

(b) Women and children should be removed to comparatively safer places from Calcutta, Madras, Chittagong, Assam and other places declared by the Government to be zones threatened by Japanese invasion. According to the statements of Sri Jumabhai, President of the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce, and the evacuees from Burma, people who were slow to leave the danger zones had to face terrible neglect and difficulties and in some cases suffered from atrocities committed by our own men. In case of invasion, similar difficulties may arise in this country as well. It is also possible for danger to threaten places which now appear to be immune from danger.

(c) In no circumstance should we give way to fear. Fear weakens the heart, leads to confusion and destroys all power of thought. In the course of the battle for England last year, London was subjected to terrible bombing from

the air, but the people of London did not lose heart. They patiently carried on as far as possible their usual activities even in the midst of the shower of bombs.

(d) Rumour should neither be spread nor believed in. It is strange that though their self-interest lies the other way, many people feel pleasure when they hear news of German or Japanese victory and give exaggerated versions of any sensational news they may catch from the propagandist broadcasts of Germany and Japan. Proper restraint should be exercised over these tendencies of the mind.

(e) Defence parties should be organized in every town, ward and village and proper training for self-defence should be given to all members of these parties. People should always keep themselves ready for mutual help and co-operation. In case of bombing people should take cover in their houses.

(f) Those who possess wealth should make it a point to render service in a generous but humble spirit to all fellow-men in the neighbourhood stricken with poverty. In times of danger great help may be derived from them. Business activities should be reduced as far as possible, so that in case of emergency there may be no difficulty in winding them up. Monetary transactions should be similarly reduced.

(g) All quarrels should be abandoned and love should be cultivated for all. Hindus, Muslims and other communities should not think of doing anything which is likely to aggravate communal discords and antagonisms.

All should make it a point to live in mutual sympathy, service and co-operation. All should sincerely try to remove the feelings of enmity and cultivate in their place the sentiments of unity and peace.

(h) Food-grains should be stocked according to one's capacity and convenience with the object of serving neighbours in case of extreme distress. It is sinful to stock grains in a crisis like this with the object of monetary gain.

(i) In every household arrangement should be made for prayers for the removal of vice and unrighteousness, for the advancement of Dharma, for universal good and for the spread of peace and happiness throughout the world. A "Dharma Sangha" has been started in Benares under the direction of a great Mahatma, Sri Sri Karapatriji Maharaj, with branches in many places. The members of this "Sangha" have to take a pledge to perform regularly everyday the Japa of either a divine Name or of a sacred Mantra, according to their capacity and the nature of their faith. The utility of this work for universal good cannot be too highly praised. Any reader interested in the work may obtain further information about this Sangha by writing to the office of the Dharma-Sangha, Sanmārga Kāryālaya, Bhadaini, Benares.

(j) Kirtana parties should be organized consisting only of men who are religiously disposed. Without much expenditure and ado, Kirtana of the Divine Name should be held here and there and even in every household.

(k) Complete reading of the *Bhāgavata* in a week, of the *Rāma-charitamānas* in nine days, readings of sacred Stotras like the *Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma* and *Śiva-Sahasranāma*, worship of Devas, performance of sacrifices, Divine worship and other religious activities should be taken up in the proper spirit. With full faith in God, one should remain pleased with every dispensation of God and should constantly feel the grace of God within his heart. As a measure of protection against danger, every man and woman should constantly practise Japa of the sacred Mantra "Hariḥ Śaranam". It is an infallible Mantra. The Great Rsi Sanaka and his three brothers eternally remain like boys below five through constant utterance of this very Mantra.

8. 'In what lies our good?' The answer to this final question is that our real and supreme good lies only in performing Bhajana, surrendering ourselves wholly to God.

The truest and most pronounced fact of our life is that we have forgotten God. We can find time for useless talks, for luxury and enjoyments, for indulgence to the senses and for quarrels and fights, but for the practice of Bhajana of the Lord we are extremely short of time. As a matter of fact, we do not realize the importance of Bhajana. The Bhāgavata says:—

"Do not the trees live, do not the bellows breathe? Do not domestic beasts and other animals live, eat and enjoy carnal pleasures! He who has not even once heard the glories of God is like but a dog, swine, camel or donkey. The ears that do not hear the accounts of

Sri Hari's great deeds are like horrible holes where snakes dwell; the tongue that does not sing the praises of God is as detestable as the tongue of a frog. The head that does not bow to Mukunda is only a burden, though furnished with a silken turban or a crown; the hands that are never used in the worship of Hari are the hands of a corpse, though they may be adorned with ornaments of gold. Eyes that do not look on the symbols of Visnu are like the eyes on the plumes of the peacock; feet that do not travel to places sacred to Visnu are like unto trees. He who never wears the dust of the feet of the Lord's devotee is a dead man even while alive; he who has not known the

fragrance of the Tulasi on Sri Hari's feet is a corpse, although he may be breathing. The heart which on the utterance of Sri Hari's Names is not moved with devotional feelings is no heart but the hardest granite. When the heart is moved with devotion, tears come to the eyes and the hair stands on end."

(*Bhagavata* II. iii. 18-24)

Therefore, so long as we continue to live, so long as the senses are active, let us devote our life and all our senses to God. True wisdom lies in this. Time is passing, death is approaching near. Let us soon take the warning to heart and surrender ourselves to God, from every point of view.

(*Kalyan*)

Science and Religion

"There is no evil but want of proportion. Pain ♪ Pain arises out of a disproportion between sensation. Dishonesty ♪ Cruelty ♪ It is all want of proportion between impulse and control."

—H. G. Wells.

Science has so thoroughly permeated every aspect of human life in the West that a clear indelible impress thereof is quite evident.

Differentiation and analysis are inherent attributes of science. The scientific outlook therefore as obtains in the West is as well analytical and differential.

Science undoubtedly has made possible tremendous materialistic advance and affluence. But as stated already its limited outlook and scope of activity spell disaster.

BY DHARAMADAS S. BHAGTANI

While it is readily conceded that analysis renders easy the understanding of various constituting elements of a problem or question, when not followed by an attempt at integration, it shall produce divergence in the viewpoint as to the relative importance of each of the elements. Everyone of the specialists claims his own dominion as the most vital and so ensues a confused state of affairs. Instance Endocrinology Neurology, Kinistherapy, Cueism, etc., in the domain of health culture.

In its inceptive state physical culture catered for knotty muscles capable of exerting strength in particular positions and ways. Soon however rational experimentation and observation warranted a revision of this original concept. Better results were achieved via other

means than the orthodox. This set the specialist a thinking and we find proper values being assigned to nervous, respiratory, circulatory, excretory and various other systems that go to make up the body. Thus a good physical director is one who takes cognizance of this fact and evolves a scheme that is conducive to a balanced harmonious cultivation of the body as a whole.

Yet it has been realized that physical health is not an isolated subject apart from human entity as a whole. It is consequently irrational to dissect life into various compartments even as experience has proved that physical health could not be partitioned into muscular health, respiratory health, etc. Life is an indivisible albeit a complex whole and any attempt at its vivisection is assuredly a retrograde step.

Now therefore it will be conceded that integration rather than differentiation; synthesis in preference to analysis are the secrets of a harmonious human progress.

A system that envelops the whole life concept inclusive of all its manifold aspects is surely the one to earn our unstinted loyalty and allegiance. How can it be in consonance with our intelligence to countenance in light of the aforesaid knowledge any system that conceives a fanatical bias in favour of a specific aspect of life?

True religion is one that makes it possible for its votary to comprehend the essential unity underlying the apparent diversity. A truly religious man is he who clearly and vividly conceives this unity and translates his

said conception in every act of his. Religion thus is an integration of life in antithesis to science which is differential in its dispositions.

There are illimitable forces that have enormous potential to tear any and everything to pieces. The destructive genius is certainly more potent than the constructive one. There can be found any number of men who may dismember a set of radio. But there are fewer people to reassemble it back to its working form. Only the latter invoke respect. Even so it is not the scientist who dissects the world but the religious leader who moulds the destiny of humanity that merits respect.

This is not intended as a slur on or denunciation of science. It only essays to impress the fact that science to achieve its legitimate ends should peremptorily be subservient to the integrating process of religion just as a stenographer, a bill clerk, a cashier, an accountant, etc., each is bossed by the General Manager who thinks of the concern as a whole.

Out of the rigorous and earnest incursions was born such a conviction and it is under inspiration of this idealistic concept that leaders of Indian thought chose to identify every domain of human activity and endeavour with its inevitable background of religion and thus characterizing marriage, etc., and even earning of money as a sacred religious activity, thereby invoking an obligation on all to peremptorily observe scrupulously the religious tenets as formulated by seers and sages even while engaged in said activities. Thus there

was nothing else but religion; the secular and the sacred were linked inseparably. Every act was a duty and a sacrifice leading one to the destined end—freedom from bondage of attachment—the state of Jivanmukti and absolution.

Through harmonious culture of the human being as a whole religion alone can effect a resurrection of the human soul; a shedding off of the degeneration of humanity; and thus usher in peace, justice, fraternity and harmony into the bruised world.

The Philosophy of Manu

BY BASANTA KUMAR CHATTERJEE, M. A.

Some of the rules laid down in the *Manusamhitā* are undoubtedly harsh. It is very peculiar that in many cases, for persons who are suffering and who can therefore expect sympathy and relief, Manu has prescribed harsh rules. From these portions of the *Manusamhitā* it would appear that Manu did not possess even ordinary sympathy and kindness. As an example we may consider the case of widows. When a woman is deprived of her husband, she is naturally very miserable. If she can find some consolation by marrying a second husband, she should be afforded all possible facilities. But look at the directions given by Manu. She must not think of marrying again. She should not wear fine clothes. She should not even take ordinary diet. Her diet should be so regulated that she might be emaciated. Is it not heartless? It is no wonder that there is a revulsion of feeling against Manu in the mind of the modern Hindus.

But how is it that Manu held such a high place among the lawgivers of ancient India? No less an authority than the Vedas have declared that whatever has been said by Manu is beneficial like

medicine. 'यदै किंच मनुरवदत् तद् मेषज्ञम्'—“Whatever Manu has said is like medicine”. This passage occurs four times in the Vedas.* Both Śankarāchārya and Rāmānujāchārya have quoted this passage in their commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras* and have held that Manu had acquired perfect knowledge.† Manu might have been heartless. But what about these illustrious saints? How could they approve the rules of Manu?

The key to this riddle is to be found in the word 'मेषज्ञ' or medicine used in the Vedas. Just as a physician prescribes bitter medicines and harsh regulations for the patient, so Manu has made harsh rules for persons who are suffering from the ills of life. Just as the intention of the physician is not to unnecessarily inflict further sufferings on the patient who is already suffering from disease, so also it is not the intention of Manu to unnecessarily increase the sufferings

* *Kathaka* 11-5; *Maitrayaniya Samhita* 1-1-5; *Taittiriya Samhita* 2-2-4-2; *Tanda Brahmana* 23-16-7.

† *Vide* commentaries on *Brahmasutras* 2-1-1 and 2-1-2

of the unfortunate. The physician prescribes bitter medicines because they are necessary to cure the disease. He makes the patient suffer because it is necessary to save him from greater suffering. So in the case of Manu. In his all-comprehensive vision Manu sees that a woman loses her husband because of her improper acts in the previous life or this life. In order to make her atone for those acts he lays down that she must not marry again and should deny herself even ordinary pleasures and comforts. When in this way the effects of the improper acts work themselves out, she can enjoy much greater happiness in her life after death. To allow a widow marry a second time is like allowing ordinary diet to a patient who cannot digest it. For the time being it may afford some satisfaction to the patient, but ultimately it increases his sufferings.

It may be objected that the doctrines of Karma and rebirth are after all mere theories. If these theories are correct, there might be some justification for such rules. But the theories may not also be correct, and then these harsh rules cause unnecessary suffering. The pleasures of this life are certain. Life after death is uncertain. Why cast away the certain for the uncertain? To this it may be replied that to the sages who have made such rules rebirth is not a mere theory. By means of Yogic vision they can see both life before birth and life after death. They can also see the working of the law of Karma. In the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, Yama tells Nachiketā:—

"I shall tell you what happens to the soul after death. Some go the wombs where they get new bodies.

Some enter trees and plants. Life after death is determined by the acts and knowledge in this life."*

In the *Rgveda Samhitā* also there are references to the doctrine of rebirth. Thus in *Rgveda Samhitā* IV. 18, 13, R̄si Bāmadeva speaks of his previous birth in which at the time of famine he cooked the entrails of a dog (अवर्त्य शुन अन्ताणि पेचे). In *Rgveda Samhitā* X. 16, we find the following words addressed to the departed spirit at the time of cremation:—

"...go as thy merit is, to earth or heaven,
Go, if it be thy lot, unto the waters;
Go, make thine home in plants
with all thy members."

The doctrines of Karma and rebirth have been accepted in all the six schools of Hindu philosophy. They are also accepted in the Buddhist and Jaina religions. Although they are not found in the Christian and Mahomedan religions, the doctrine of Karma is partially accepted in both these faiths, for according to both one who performs good acts goes to heaven and one who performs evil acts goes to hell. In other words, the result of acts performed in this life have to be enjoyed after death. The statement embodies one half of the doctrine of Karma. The other half is that one is born in good or bad environments according to the acts in the previous life.

* हन्त त इदं प्रवक्ष्यामि गुरुं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।
यथा च मरणं प्राय आरमा भवति गौतमः ॥
योनिमये प्रपञ्चन्ते शरीरत्वाय देहिनः ।
साणुमयेऽनुसंयन्ति यथाकर्म यथाश्रुतम् ॥

(*Kaṭhopaniṣad* V 6-7)

It will thus appear that the doctrine of Karma and rebirth is a comprehensive law of which fragments are found in other religions. No other theory can explain why different persons are born in widely varying environments. Science accepts as true a doctrine which can explain all known phenomena if there is no other doctrine which can also explain them. The doctrine of Karma and rebirth can explain the happiness and suffering of mankind while no other doctrine can do so. This doctrine is therefore as good as the best scientific doctrine.

We have examined the doctrine of Karma and rebirth at some length because it is the basis of the code of Manu. If this doctrine is not accepted many of the rules in the code will appear to be unjust and discriminating. If it is accepted the whole code will be found to be true and beneficial. Thus Manu prescribes different duties for the Brahman, the Kṣatriya, the Vaiśva and the Śūdra; for the same offence the punishments for the four castes are different. These rules will appear to be unjust if birth is considered to be an accident. But they will appear to be reasonable if birth is determined by the acts of previous life. For there is nothing wrong if there is discrimination in the opportunities given or treatment accorded to men who have performed good acts and those who have performed evil acts. In fact, this is done in all societies. The difference is this that while ordinarily this distinction is based on the acts performed in this life, Manu has based it on the acts performed in this as well as previous life. Modern psychology has discovered the existence

of vast regions of the unconscious mind. The unconscious mind is different for different individuals. It is not the result of any acts performed or impressions received in this life. No doctrine other than the doctrine of rebirth can satisfactorily explain its origin.

That some passages of the *Manusamhitā* indicate that the author had risen very high in spiritual plane no one can deny. Such spiritual advancement is not consistent with the narrowness and harshness which some other passages seem to indicate. It must be admitted that things were looked at from a point of view which is unfamiliar to the modern mind educated on Western lines. Such passages are so numerous and deal with things of such fundamental importance that the theory of interpolation can never explain them satisfactorily. It should be remembered that the wisdom and spirituality of Manu are universally acknowledged by all ancient saints and scholars no matter to which particular school of Hinduism they belong.

Manu has defined the Swarajya or the highest aim of life as the stage in which one can see one's own self in all beings and can see all beings in one's own self:—

सर्वगुणेषु चात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
समं पश्यन्नात्मयाजी साराज्यमधिगच्छति ॥

We find that the Upaniṣads also lay down the same goal:—

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूदिजानतः ।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोकः प्रकृत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

(Iṣopaniṣad 7)

“When one attains the knowledge in which all beings become one's own

self then one can have no ignorance, no misery."

The *Bhagavad-gītā* also lays down the identical goal.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

(*Gītā VI. 29*)

"One who has mastered Yoga, sees one's self in all beings and all beings in one's own self. He looks with equality on all beings."

It will thus be seen that the aim of the *Manusamhitā* is the same as that of the Upaniṣads or the *Gītā*. In fact, the *Manusamhitā* describes the social framework which best conduces to the realization of the vision in which the universe becomes identified with the self. Obedience to the parents and preceptor, study of the Vedas, performance of Sandhyā and Tarpaṇa, hospitality to guests, offering food to all living beings, fighting in the righteous cause, trade, industry, personal service to the higher castes, these are laid down

as the duties of the various castes. The *Gītā* says that by the proper performance of the duties assigned to his caste a man can attain God (*Gītā XVIII. 45, 46*). Rāmānuja commenting on the last aphorism of the *Brahmasūtra* says that by the regular performance of the duties assigned to his caste a man can best worship God, who is thereupon pleased to free him from sins which cause ignorance; he can then realize his own self and thereby become immersed in an ocean of joy; he thus attains God and is never born again:—

एवं अहरहरनुषीयमानवर्णश्रमधर्मानुगृहीततदुपासनस्पृ-
तवस्माराधनप्रीत उपासानान् अनादिकालप्रवृत्तानन्तदुस्तर-
कर्मसञ्चयरूपाविद्यां विनिवर्त्य स्वयाथात्म्यानुभवरूपानविधिकाति-
शयानन्दं प्रापय्य न पुनर्निवर्तयति ।

(*Sṛī Bhāṣya IV. iv. 22*)

Thus there is no contradiction between Vedānta philosophy and the Varṇāśrama Dharma as laid down by Manu. On the other hand, the two are complementary to each other.

The Praṇava is God's original name; it should be muttered and its meaning should be meditated upon. This will lead to Self-realization and removal of hindrances.

—*Yogadarśana*.

Parents, wife, children, relations—none can render any help in the other world. It is virtue alone which stands in one's support there. Friends and relations return to their homes throwing the dead body like a piece of wood or lump of earth. It is virtue which accompanies him there.

—*Manusmṛti*.

Want of enmity towards any creature through mind, speech and action, mercy to all and charity, these are the eternal qualifications of a holy being.

—*Mahābhārata*.

The Birth of Lord Krishna

By H. SRINIVAS

On 2nd Sept. this year the Hindus throughout Bhāratavarṣa will celebrate the festival of Janmāṣṭamī (or Gokulāṣṭamī, or Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī), that is to say, the anniversary of the birthday of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Every Hindu child since its birth hears the name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the God-Incarnate, who assumed human form to rid the world of its evil and re-establish Dharma. To every devout Hindu the sacred *Bhagavadgītā*, the gift of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to the world, is a dearly prized vade-mecum, a guide in weal or woe.

The story of the birth and glorious deeds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is told at length in the *Śrimad Bhāgavata* which should be read by all devotees. This sacred story has been told and re-told times out of number, and yet will bear further repetition. It is the darkest hour of the night that heralds the brightest dawn, and it is often when the heart of man, trampled under the iron heels of the tyrant, begins to sink in fear and despair that the first signs of deliverance make their appearance. The wail of helpless humanity in distress unerringly reaches the Throne of Grace, and He responds by incarnating in human form to preserve and protect His own creation. So it happened in the Dwāpara Yuga of old, in the Kingdom of Mathura, and so will it happen in the future, whenever greed and pride of power drive tyrants to trample their fellow-beings under foot.

In the good old days, in the ancient city of Mathura, Kaṁsa had usurped the Kingdom, and cast his father Ugrasena, the rightful king, into prison. Kaṁsa's sister, Devakī, was given in marriage to Vasudeva. In the marriage procession a voice was heard in the heavens that the eighth child of Devakī would kill Kaṁsa. Kaṁsa spared Devakī's life on Vasudeva's promise to bring all his children to Kaṁsa for destruction. The seventh child of Devakī (Balarāma) miraculously escaped destruction. And at the time of the arrival of the eighth child Vasudeva and Devakī were in prison and closely guarded. When the fateful hour of Aṣṭamī, the night when Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa incarnated on earth as the child of Vasudeva and Devakī arrived, the sentinels who guarded the prison went into a stupor by the power of Yogamāyā. Lo, as the feet of the Divine Child touched the earth, a sweet melody filled the sky, the air began to quiver with joy, a strange light, bright as that of a thousand suns put together and at the same time as sweet and pleasant as that of a thousand moons, illumined the prison cell. Vasudeva, finding that the sentinels were fast asleep, hastily wrapped up the babe in a rag, came out of the prison, rushed to the banks of the Yamunā, which, by a miracle, was rendered knee-deep, easily crossed over to the other bank where lived the chief of cowherds, Nanda of Brindaban. Depositing his precious treasure on the lap of Nanda's wife,

Yaśodā, and taking her child in return, he came back to the prison before the dawn of day. Thus, by the inscrutable way of Providence, Kaṁsa's plans were thwarted.

The stupor into which the sentinels had fallen gradually left them, and when Kaṁsa came to the prison house he found a little child on his sister's lap and dashed it to the ground. But lo ! the child flew into the sky; and now as a sister of Viṣṇu became visible with her eight arms bearing eight kinds of weapons.

While Kaṁsa was thus reigning at Mathura Śrī Kṛṣṇa was growing in the house of Yaśodā and Nanda. Days passed into months, and months into years. Often in the midst of His play with the cowherd boys, the Lord would look pensive and listless as if he could hear the cry of distress from afar.

The call came more distinctly at last, and on Kaṁsa's invitation to a wrestling match, the two brothers, Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa threw Kaṁsa's wrestlers to the ground one after another. Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa dragged Kaṁsa from his royal seat by the hair and killed him on the spot. Thus was the Divine purpose fulfilled.

Placing Kaṁsa's father, Ugrasena, on the throne, the Lord began to serve him as an ordinary dignitary of the Yadava state. He founded the beautiful city of Dwaraka on the shore of the Arabian sea. According to tradition, this city was built all in gold in the brief space of one day by the celestial architect Viśwakarmā. Indra sent from Amarāvatī choicest trees and shrubs for

Lord Kṛṣṇa's parks. Centuries have rolled by, and even now a part of the city stands to remind us of its old glory. It is connected by rail and is also reached by the sea-route.

The glorious deeds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the great part He played to save the Pāṇḍavas is described in the great epic, *Mahābhārata*, in which the famous Gitopadeśa to Arjuna is included.

Mathura, the birth-place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is even now the portent centre of spiritual enchantment that has withstood centuries of kaleidoscopic changes. In the sacred scriptures Mathura and six other cities are described as so sacred that the very mention of their names have the power of eradicating sin and sorrow. Beautifully situated on the banks of the sacred river Yamunā and hallowed by the association of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Mathura is one of the foremost places of pilgrimage to the Hindus. A Vedic prayer says:—

"May You, oh Lord, make me immortal in the land where flow the Gāṅgā and the Yamunā, where runs the Eastern Saraswati and where the Lord of the Moon resides."

It is needless to describe the sanctity of a visit to Mathura and Brindaban and a bath in the Yamunā. Mathura has several charming Ghats, or bathing places, Temples and Dharmāśālās. Several fairs and festivals are held in different seasons of the year. On the spot where stood Vasudeva's prison, now stands a beautiful Śrī Kṛṣṇa Temple. An enclosure near by marks the spot where Kaṁsa was killed.

Gokul, a forest formerly, is a pretty village where the boy Kṛṣṇa spent his childhood days.

About eighteen miles from Mathura is the famous Hill Govardhana, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed one of His greatest miracles. Threatened with a deluge by Indra, the Lord of the Clouds, Śrī Kṛṣṇa lifted up the mountain on his little finger, gave protection to the cowherds and the cattle and saved them from the floods.

The sacred spot known as Brindaban is created as a mark of special favour of Lord Viṣṇu, who took incarnation as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in token of his profound love for mankind. It is a sanctified spot shaped like a lotus of a thousand petals with its centre at Brindaban, comprising eight of the petals. The Purāṇas say that sanctified Brindaban has the power of purifying one of all sins if one stays there even for a short time. It was here that Bhakti in its highest aspects flowered to leave an object-lesson of self-surrender

to God for the guidance of humanity. There is a large number of Temples and Dharmāśalās in Brindaban.

The various aspects of the life and deeds of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa have a charm, all their own. His child life appeals to every mother, His Līlās thrill the loving hearts of devotees, His simple life among the cowherds cheer the village youths, His magic flute captivates the pious, His teachings light the path of seekers after Truth. He fought with evil and sported with the good. He was the sternest of the stern with the wicked and the softest of the soft with the good. Outwardly viewed these may appear common place, but they have an esoteric significance which shows Him to be the All Highest. He lived the life of an ideal *Karmayogi*. His teaching of the *Gītā* to Arjuna is His crowning glory. The beloved of devotees, the friend of the helpless, the redeemer of evil, the embodiment of Dharma—Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa—is for all, for all times to come.

"While a man is given to hatred, resentment, anger and condemnation, he is subject to injustice as the dreamer to his dream, and cannot do otherwise than see injustice; but he who has overcome those fiery and blinding elements, knows that unerring Justice presides over all, that in reality there is no such thing as injustice in the whole of the universe."

—James Allen.

Gently, gently, child of Light;
Walk in Life's narrow way;
No room there for personal might
Only sweet Spirit's sway.

—Herald of Good Will.

Surrender-Yoga

By Y. JAGANNATHAM, B. A.

*Renunciation
of
doership*

"Rendering unto God the things that are God's" is the Biblical phrase that explains in succinct language whatever is comprehended by the term

Surrender-Yoga. It is common knowledge to all votaries of the devotional line that Jīva is a scintilla or an atom of the Divine Power, and that whatever power is claimed by a Jīva, the same is not only derived from the power of Iśwara, but controlled also every moment by that power. All actions of a Jīva do therefore belong to Iśwara and are in a sense actions of Iśwara Himself, having been performed as informed and inspired by Him as his Indweller. But when Māyā interposes between God and man, the latter is naturally tempted to claim such actions as his own as he is not able to know that his works and his will have no separate existence from God's works and God's will. There is no denying that God is the Director of the whole universe. His will be done as also His work. To perform His will and His works is the highest Dharma of a Jīva, the *summum bonum* of human existence. The discriminating Jīva is therefore always wary of his position in this world, and places all his actions at the lotus feet of Bhagavān. In the *Gītā* we find enunciated not only the renunciation of fruitive actions and fruit of actions, but of the doership also which is the highest of all spiritual teachings. "I claim no doership for whatever actions I am found to perform in this world. God

Himself is the real Doer. If I am found to be engaged in anything, the same is merely an expression of the movements of the Divine Power itself that motivates everything in this world. I have no works apart from Iśwara's"—this is what is meant by the renunciation of doership. This is best explained by the very words of the Lord Himself in the *Gītā* when He told Arjuna on assuming the Universal Form for his edification, "By Me, they are already slain; be thou the ostensible cause."

*Jīva controlled
by Divine
Power*

What did Arjuna do when he was caught in a dilemma in his conception of duties on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra?

He approached Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the words, "Command me. I am Your suppliant", which indicate in clear terms that he has offered to surrender himself to His will. The Lord's teaching of the *Gītā*-Gospel practically commenced from here in response to this supplication of Arjuna. And mark the words with which Śrī Kṛṣṇa wound up *Gītā*-teaching at the end of His discourse, "Do not get yourself enmeshed in the network of conflicting duties. I demand your unqualified surrender and abjuration by you of all your so-called duties inclusive of your soul's right to exercise its inherent and eternal function of service to the Godhead over which also a Jīva is often tempted to sit in judgment." This evidently means to saying, "I command and you obey. Let

nothing which you may call your own disturb our respective positions." Thus we see that Surrender-Yoga is the main theme of the Lord's teaching in the *Gītā*. It was also taught there that the Jīva should either surrender himself to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Plenary aspect of the Absolute or to Iśwara, the God residing in matter, who is His subjunctive portion and the inner Guiding Principle of all Jīvas. The reason is clear. Śrī Kṛṣṇa knows too well that the power of a Jīva is after all atomic and that it cannot be exercised aright unless properly controlled and guided by the Divine Power. The Divine Nature known as Prakṛti, who is the Mother of Cosmic creation, impels and controls every action and every movement in this vast creation under the guidance of the Supreme Lord and she, being the premier devotee of the Lord, has no other motive than to see that all such acts serve the will of the Lord and conduce to the well-being of creation. But if owing to his atomic power and intelligence, the Jīva is unable to comprehend her motive and tries to run counter to her doings for asserting his own will, Prakṛti will not allow his erratic will to work out. She will at once take him into her grip and turn his will in the direction of God's will as she has both the knowledge and power enough to do so. The Jīva is in this way bound by Prakṛti and feels either exhilaration of success or silent suffering of disappointment according as his own little plans and petty decisions coincide or clash with the Great Plan of God. It is for this reason that the *Gītā* enjoined on the Jīva to perform every action of his as a piece

of felicitous or all-aspecting service to the Overlord just as Prakṛti in a spirit of selfless service shapes every event in creation to conform to the Lord's will. Besides, it was clearly mentioned in the *Gītā* that for transcending Māyā, the only course for the Jīva is to seek shelter of Bhagavān and so, not only should we render as an offering to Him whatever we do, whatever we enjoy, whatever we sacrifice, whatever we offer and even whatever we conceive, but we should also offer our own selves by holding ourselves in extreme readiness to watch and obey the divine nods and winks, to enforce with implicit obedience the Divine decrees and orders, and get our services accepted by Him by thus serving His will and pleasure.

Says a great soul, "We exist only in relation to God, the Absolute existence. We live in Him as branches of the True Vine. Let us therefore ever glorify Him and obey His commands. Placed as we are as mere actors in this world-stage, let us justify our relative existence by simply dancing to the tune of His enchanting Flute and playing our part with no reservations. This is our premier duty."

Redemption of the "Hunch-back" Jīva Self-surrender, therefore, plays a vital part in shaping the spiritual life of a Jīva. A man steeped in worldly wisdom and duplicity is naturally impervious to his duties towards God and His creation. He leads consequently an ugly life although it may be seemingly successful in the view of like-minded persons of this world. Worldly wisdom and duplicity comprehend in their very nature inconsistency in

thought, word and deed. Even highest statesmanship takes pride in mental reservations and springing surprises on the expectant public by taking courses of action quite divergent of oft-repeated declarations of policy. This three-fold crookedness, in other words, this Trivakra state of thought, word and deed, makes the conditioned soul a veritable hunchback, Kubjā. But even this hunchback has its own redemption when the call for service comes from God. Extreme readiness to offer service, which is one form of self-surrender, brings this ugly soul instantly to the Lotus-feet of the Transcendental Beauty-Specialist which Śri Kṛṣṇa is. The state of Trivakra is gone for ever as by the magic touch of Śri Kṛṣṇa, who is Beauty's Own-Self, thought, word and deed automatically fall in a line, get pure consequently, and the soul is restored to its original transcendental beauty. It is therefore self-surrender that counts even in the case of the worst sinner as it is sure to redeem him eventually, as stated in the *Gitā*, by making his thoughts on God one-pointed.

The tree of Life

The *Gitā* does not condemn the life of a householder, but directs the householder to lead a life of dispassion. This is put figuratively when it says that this deep-rooted eternal tree of opposites (*Saṃsāra*) referred to as the tree of good and evil in the Bible must be hewn down not actually by the dangerous and almost impossible process of utter renunciation or *Sannyāsa* of the salvantionist which is likened to the cutting of the branch on which one sits, but dexterously by the sword of unattachment (for, cannot a

bird perched on a tree manage not to peck at its fruit as in the case of the Iśwara-Bird of the *Upaniṣad*?) and that one should seek the Primal Person alone as his refuge and endeavour to reach that uneffaceable place, that Supreme Abode, Parama Dhāma, gaining which one never returns, and from which proceeded all this outpouring. So it is self-surrender that is stressed upon throughout the teaching of the *Gitā*, for the Lord knows that in that way alone lies the redemption of the fallen soul.

There is but one thing in this world for the possession of which a "Non-possession" Jīva ought to endeavour throughout his life. It is what the wise call "non-possession", the priceless jewel known as Aparigraha in Hindu philosophy. One who is established in this naturally feels that there is nothing in this creation, both mobile and motionless, which he can rightfully call his own; but at the same time we should remember that he is never disappointed with life: every phase of it he enjoys in the spirit of serving the Lord, with the greatest of dispassion and perfect composure of mind, giving up the fruit of all his actions to God, who is its Ordainer, Controller and Dispenser. In short, his enjoyment of life is an unbroken chain of surrenders or givings-back, a continual rendering to God what is His own as stated at the beginning of this article.

Jīva, a mere hand of God

This spirit of self-surrender naturally develops in a Jīva a feeling of utter humility which makes him reflect constantly on his own microscopic position and the overpowering majesty of the Lord

of creation. He says unto himself, "I am but a droplet in this vast ocean of the Lord's creation. I am a negligible entity who can neither control nor cause to eventuate at my will even a single movement or incident relating to the workings of this creation which are always directed and regulated by the Great Lord to serve His will and suit His mighty Plan. I do not even know how to deserve the mercy of the All-Bountiful Lord. It is the Lord that should make me deserve the same. What avails my obscure and atomic position? I am His mere hand, Hasta-mātra, and one of the myriad hands of the Lord of Action. Who can know what service he has intended for this hand of His? Will he not smile at me if I, who am His tool, Upakaraṇa, begin to glorify myself and hanker after name and fame? The man at a dinner-table helps himself with his hand but still he says, "I have dined". How can his hand claim credit for feeding him? And will we not smile at it if it for once gets articulate and begin to assert its doership? Reasoning thus, he gets more and more humble and nearmost to truth and becomes a most willing hand of God, an instrument for Him to handle as He pleases.

What did Śrī Kṛṣṇa say when He was showing His Universal Form to Arjuna? "I am Time and have assumed this form to efface the worlds.

Lord, the sole Actor and Ordainer
Even without thee, none of the warriors in the hostile ranks now standing face to face can escape death. Therefore arise; win renown, vanquish thine enemy, and enjoy the prosperous Kingdom. Already have these by

Myself been slain. Be thou but My instrument." By this we clearly see the nature of credit intended for all Jivas, who serve the will of God. Arjuna as an instrument in the hand of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was to get credit only by killing the enemy who had already got up the scaffold of time and whom no executioner would spare now.

It is the Lord that ordains and regulates the eventuation of even the most trifling incidents in this vast universe of His creation. In fact, the whole creation serves as His body and all Jivas are as His hands. Duryodhana too was one of His hands; but he is His ulcerated hand. He gives much pain which shoots all over the World-Body, and the Lord also appears to feel it. We know that to relieve the pain of an ulcer, we undergo a course of treatment such as the application of poultices, balms, unguents and the like. But certain ulcers may prove malignant and not at times yield to such mild treatment. Duryodhana was certainly very mildly persuaded by his well-wishing kinsmen to restore to his cousin brothers the kingdom usurped from them. Even Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the very Lord, meditated; but all was in vain. The ulcer not only did not yield, but even a danger of its spreading to the other unaffected parts was then apprehended. What should the Lord do then? The surgical knife must be whipped out and the Lord must perform self-surgery. With one of His other healthy hands, in the present case, Arjuna, he chops off the hand with the ulcer, Duryodhana, and his body gets immediate relief. So we now clearly see that it is not the man that achieves

something in this world, but the very God through his instrumentality.

What was the part played by Arjuna in this except that of a hand of God? Could he dare claim doership? We even remember that at the outset he rebelled against the Lord when he was asked to do His will and did not the Lord just smile at him? Suppose we sit for dinner and our right hand turns round and says, "I won't lift the morsel to your mouth". I think we will just smile at it and make it obey us instantly. It is just the case with God at work. He works with all His hands and not even one of them can dare disobey Him. Like Arjuna, we too often rebel against God and try to run counter to His plans; but He gives us a rude shake which opens our eyes, and gets all His work done by us smiling all the time we were at it behind the magic flute on His lips. Let us not forget this even for a moment and let real knowledge blaze on our hearts which makes us humbler than a blade of grass even in our day-to-day life. "O Lord! thou art the sole Actor. I am but Thine instrument" is what constitutes real knowledge.

In conclusion, I request the kind reader to remember just one thing. There is no denying that absolute surrender when practised will put the man in

Tearful communion with God
the lap of God, that God renovates the Antalikaraṇa of His votary which is His own dwelling place and "sitting there, He dispels the gloom of ignorance with the light of knowledge, and that He does this, to use the words of the Lord, 'out of compassion for them, the dwellers in God'!" But since the Antalikarana, the instrument working inside the body,

got stuck up in the age-and-aeon-long clay-coating of the shape of hankering after lust, greed and renown, it cannot get clean or useful as soon as a surrender is made. The votary should not therefore leave the whole thing to God, but himself endeavour to wash away this triple-natured clay with tears indicative of a broken and contrite heart. Closetting himself only with God who is not only his Master, but a most beloved Friend too, he should say to Him in deep emotion and in a remorseful mood, "O my Lord! Myriads are the sins I have committed both in this life and other lives of mine, and they are unpardonable too. I now realize my transgressions and swear before Thee with a penitent heart that I will not sin again. I am weak and forlorn. O Friend of the fallen! Have mercy on me and save me; for Thou art my only Saviour. 'My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God?' Take me therefore to Thy bosom and say, "Fear not".

When such a prayer is made with guileless tears, the latter are sure to wash away the clay-coating of the internal organ that has up till now smothered the serving mood of the immaculate soul, and the Jīva is now, like unto a naked piece of iron attracted by the Divine Magnet Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is now blessed also with God-vision, for, as the Bible would put it, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of broken heart and saveth such as be of a contrite heart."

God's solicitude for saints
Such glorious devotees are the most favoured of God, as they, in the words of the Bible, commune with their own hearts

upon their beds acknowledging their sins unto Him and confessing their transgressions with tears watering their couches. The *Gitā* says that they perish not and the Bible says that they are preserved for ever as the Lord forsaketh not His saints. When once there appears contrition and guilelessness in the heart of His devotee, the Great Lord, who is an Ocean of Mercy, presents Himself before him with outstretched hands to lift him in an instant out of the quagmire of metempsychosis. That he has strayed away from Him for an unpardonably

long time, and that he ought to have commenced to serve Him earlier are no considerations at all to Him who is unconcerned with the pettiness of human logic, and whose love shines the same on all living beings.

Tradition goes to say that Mira Bai, the crest-jewel of Prema-Bhaktas, used to weep for a time daily for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His alms of love. A *Sādhana* of an easier type for God realization is, I think, beyond human comprehension. All glory to Surrender-Yoga and its votaries !

Appayacharya-II

(Concluded from p. 454 of the July issue)

By K. VISWANATHAN

It has been the fate of all great original thinkers and reformers from Socrates downwards to experience persecution, ostracism and malignment; and his real worth is known only long after his demise. Rarely has one such great reformer escaped persecution. Such has been the lot of this philosopher also; he had to experience persecution at the hands of ignorant Brahmins who would not and could not appreciate the value of his teachings and appraise its true worth, and futile attempts were also made frequently to ostracize him.

It would perhaps be no exaggeration to say that he was knowledge, kindness and love personified. He translated into Tamil several of his large works for the benefit of his disciples who were ignorant of Sanskrit. One of his disciples was Ananta Krishna Pillai, a successful lawyer, who practised

in one of the civil courts of the Tinnevelly district, and whose love and reverence for his master was unbounded. It was evidently for this man that he translated his valuable commentaries on the *Rāma-Gitā* and *Yoga-sāra*, a work on the synthetic interpretation of the three schools or systems of Yoga. When my father the late Pandit G. Krishna Sastri, wrote to this man for the loan of these, he wrote in reply that he could not part with them even for a day and that a copyist might be deputed to his place for making a copy of it. He compared these two to his eyes and felt his incompetency to describe the greatness of this teacher who wrote such a thing. The difficult task of publishing his writings was entrusted in 1892 by himself to Pandit G. Krishna Sastri of the *Arya Siddhanta Chandrika* fame, one of his few disciples. After

years of patient study, research, travel and scrutiny, he was able to find out that all his (Appayacharya's) writings were based on *Tattvasarayana*, an old Vedantic Itihasa which is as voluminous as the *Rāmāyaṇa* and on the Brahma Sūtra portion of which his great ancestor, Appavadikshita, has written an unrivalled commentary called *Adhikarana Kanchuka*; this was written some 350 years ago, the date is variously given as 1575 and 1585; and on other portions of which he has himself written his own invaluable commentaries such as those of the 108 Upaniṣads.

It is now too much to expect that the world at large will appreciate the universal nature of his religious and philosophic teachings, but this will be the case when all his writings are published, read and digested by intelligent seekers after truth and God. He may be called a worthy contemporary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He was more in favour of leading a householder's life than that of a Sannyasin. The reasons that led him to this differentiation are many and cannot be dealt with here. One can understand it fully only after knowing something about his system of philosophy itself. I shall give a summary of his system of philosophy in another article.

Dr. F. O. Schrader of the Kiel University wrote in 1906 about the system of philosophy propounded by this Acharya as follows:—

"The system, a bibliography of which is herewith for the first time offered to the public, seems to deserve special attention in more than one respect. It is a complete and most clever synthesis of

the 108 Upaniṣads, the only one of its kind; it has, further, several original features, such as the doctrine of grace, as explained in the 27th section of *Jīva-chintamani*;* it is finally important to the historian because of some traces of high antiquity, e. g., the reference to Jaigishavya in *Tattvasarayana* (I. ii. 1, 57). Appavadikshitacharya, to whom all the works described in the following list, except the first two, are ascribed, is a modern writer, but he had evidently at his disposal many an ancient tradition hardly, if at all, available at present, and his manner of thinking as well as of expressing his thoughts is so peculiar that, although, as yet, but superficially acquainted with his works, I am inclined to believe that an important and lasting place will have to be assigned to him in the history of both *belles-lettres* and philosophy of India. Our Librarian, Pandit G. Krishna Sastri, who has supplied all the information contained in this bibliography, is a personal disciple of Appavadikshitacharya and has made a special study of the entire literature for the last fifteen years" (Introductory note to the Bibliography of Sankhya-voga Samuchchaya works).

He died at Naranammalpuram where he was settled by his disciples during the latter part of his life, on the Vyāsa Pūrnimā day, Ani 1076 M. E. (corresponding to June-July 1901) exactly 30 days after the death of his loving, dutiful and cultured wife, and fifteen days after he had become a Sannyasin, leaving a

* Bharati Bros of Bombay propose to bring out a revised edition of this with the English translation.

worthy son* and some daughters, a number of disciples and also 150 valuable works† mostly in MSS. on Sankhya-yoga Samuchchaya. The extent of his works can be gauged by the fact that it is over two and a half lakhs of *granthas* (a *grantha* being equal to 32 letters).

The Guru-Sishya Romance

BY R. RAMAKRISHNAN, M. A., L. T.

Love is the central fact in life. Family life will be an impossibility in the absence of love between the husband and the wife or between the parents and the children. Spiritual life will be a sham if the human mind is not filled with love for God. God himself has been described as Pure Love. No organization can thrive unless the men who make it feel drawn towards one another. In the absence of love work loses its charms, life grows dull, there is no urge to noble action. This grand feature of Love plays a vital part in the sphere of spiritual Sādhana also. The love that is found between the Guru and the Śisya (the Master and the disciple) is of a type that is rarely met with in the other spheres of human activity, and the story of its development, its functioning and its fruition is truly a romance.

There is a feeling in some quarters that a Guru is not an indispensable entity after all, that there need be no intermediary between man and God. This feeling is perhaps the result of the excesses of priesthood and of the low levels to which the system of Kula Guru (family preceptor) has sunk in

the society of today. But it is foolish to conclude that because certain fruits are found rotten, ripeness in fruits is an impossibility; every one who calls himself a Guru, is not a Guru, and a true Guru is a very rare thing indeed. But a Guru; a true one, is quite a necessity in the spiritual field. It is true of course that the aspirant must strive hard and walk every step of the rugged and steep path, but the guidance of a Guru saves him from falls and climb downs. A child has itself to do the learning process, yes, every bit of it, but no sane man will say that on that account a teacher is not needed for the child, though the teacher's work like the gardener's is negative and the teacher only prepares the ground and provides the environment while the growth comes from within the child. Spiritual Sādhana is the most glorious and the most difficult among human efforts; and in this last and most eventful journey the pilgrim will at every step require the minute attention and unfailing help of a wise and loving guide.

The Guru-Śisya relationship has been studied and beautifully described in

* He died on 23-4-1904.

† These are being published by Bharati Bros.

our holy books dealing with the principles of religious life and the concrete examples of great personalities. It is said that a true disciple is as difficult to find as a true Master. It is also said that a Master is as eager to meet a worthy disciple as the latter is to meet the former. The earnest aspirant who is possessed of the requisite qualities for Sādhana goes here and there in search of a drink divine that will quench his thirst of soul, gets disappointed in many places and at last urged by the unseen hand that rules our destinies, meets his Master. But the disciple is advised to test his Master through and through before surrendering himself to him, for if the Master be imperfect no good will result. The joy that a Master derives on meeting a worthy disciple is very great also. And when they have met and accepted each other, there springs and grows between them a deep relationship which is full of sweetness and blessedness, and which is of a kind that has no parallel in family and society. No worldly considerations, no thoughts of earthly reward, no narrow ideas of self taint their relationship.

In the life of Sri Ramkrishna Paramahamsa, (the great saint of Bengal of the nineteenth century, the illustrious Master of the world-renowned Swami Vivekananda, and the spirit behind the philanthropic organization known as the Sri Ramakrishna Mission which is now engaged both in India and abroad in the noble work of disseminating right ideas of religion and of serving suffering humanity in all kinds of ways, equating such service with worship)

we find many spiritual truths explained and illustrated. And it will be profitable to try to understand from his life the mystic grandeur and the romantic sweetness of the Guru-Śiṣya relationship.

Sri Ramakrishna was unique in many ways. And his first vision of God came to him as a result of his own efforts, efforts the thoroughness and intensity of which were of an astonishingly high order. But subsequently he accepted a few Gurus and learnt from them the modes of Sādhana. One of his Gurus was a woman and another was a saint who had reached very high levels of spiritual consciousness. Several other Gurus taught him also particular lines of procedure. Sri Ramakrishna was an ideal disciple in that he achieved results with surprising quickness; this was the result of his capacity to identify himself completely with the task on hand and of his powers of intense application. Sri Ramakrishna was an extraordinary disciple also, as very often he was able to teach his erstwhile Gurus and illumine certain dark spots in their understanding of the ultimate truths.

The relation between Sri Ramakrishna and his own disciples is very revealing of many traits of the Guru-Śiṣya romance and to a brief exposition of this relation we shall now turn our attention, telling our readers at the same time that it will be eminently worth while for them to get a more detailed idea of the subject by a study of the biographies of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples.

After the completion of all his Sadhanas and after gathering unto himself all the varied treasures of the sea of

spiritual effort, Sri Ramakrishna experienced a passionate longing for the company of disciples who would prove to be worthy inheritors and broadcasters of his message. It is said that he actually cried aloud calling unto him the pure young birds that would learn of him and sing unto the world the life-giving tunes of his mission. This genuine call had its immediate response and a band of brilliant, young intellectuals came to him.

The most important as well as the most widely known of this group was Narendra, the future Swami Vivekananda. An intellectual aristocrat, and highly gifted with all graces of the soul as he was, Narendra wanted, early in life, to know truth in its entirety. He approached many savants and asked them pointedly, "Have you seen God?" (We must picture with due solemnity the mighty feelings that lay behind these simple words of this young genius). None could satisfy him till Destiny took him to Sri Ramakrishna who gave him the astounding assurance, "Yes, I have seen God. I can show Him to you." Even at the first meeting Sri Ramakrishna understood that Narendra was to be his heir. But Narendra's acceptance of Ramakrishna was not a quick or easy affair. He was too great to be satisfied with anything short of absolute conviction, and he 'fought' Ramakrishna for six years. Sri Ramakrishna loved him all the more for his spirit of questioning. The Paramahamsa wanted his disciples to test him 'as the money-changers do their coins'. In the end Narendra found that Sri Ramakrishna was pure gold, and

surrendered to him completely. The story of the love between Ramakrishna and Vivekananda is a fit theme for a poet. Sri Ramakrishna loved Narendra with a mother's love, and would not bear long separation from him. He would go around the streets of Calcutta in search of this young man. Whenever Naren was at Dakhineswar, Sri Ramakrishna was supremely happy. He gave to Naren exceptional 'privileges' and foresaw his future career. He roused Naren's latent energies and made them flow along lines of the highest utility to humanity.

On his part Naren regarded Sri Ramakrishna as the be-all and end-all of his life. The carrying out of the Master's mission became his one passion. Behind all his own epoch-making successes in the East and West, Naren saw and felt the grace of his Master. How much he thought he owed to his Master will be evident from these words of his: "If there has been anything achieved by me, by thoughts, or words, or deeds, if from my lips has ever fallen one word that has helped anyone in the world, I lay no claim in it, it was his (Sri Ramakrishna's). But if there have been curses falling from my lips, if there has been hatred coming out of me, it is all mine, and not his. All that has been weak has been mine, and all that has been life-giving, strengthening, pure and holy has been his inspiration, his words and he himself." Surely this attitude is the high watermark of regard for the Guru.

Sri Ramakrishna's relationship with his other disciples who were only 'lesser' than Vivekananda, though each of them was mighty in his own way brings to

light many other features of the Guru-Śiṣya connection. Girish Chandra Ghosh, the famous dramatist of Bengal, was thoroughly un-spiritual, but later became one of the most ardent disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. The story of his conversion reads like a miracle. Sri Ramakrishna, the great teacher that he was, allowed him to grow along his own peculiar line, but by a clever 'attack' turned his entire nature heavenward. All the faculties of Girish were retained, but were given a new orientation. Girish became a shining example of self-surrender to the Guru. Among the young men who came to Ramakrishna were atheists, learned atheists, who had no faith in God or scripture or Sādhana and who could cleverly argue out the non-existence of God. But Sri Ramakrishna's compassion was so great that he never turned away such people, as any ordinary Guru might have done, but accepted them and drew them out of their ignorance by making them 'see' and then believe. One example of this is quoted below: (The extract is from Romain Rolland's biography of Sri Ramakrishna).

"One of Sri Ramakrishna's glances", Vivekananda once said, "could change a whole life."

And he spoke from experience, this Naren, who had upheld his philosophic doubts in passionate revolt against Ramakrishna, until he felt the melting in his constant fire and avowed himself vanquished. He had proved the truth of what Ramakrishna had told him that 'living faith may be given and received in a tangible fashion and more truly than anything else in the world.'

Ramakrishna's certainty was so gentle yet so strong that the most brutal denials of these young people made him smile; he was so certain that they would disappear like morning mist before the midday sun. When Kaliprasad assailed him with a torrent of denials, he said,

"My son, do you believe in God?"

"No."

"Do you believe in religion?"

"No, nor in the Vedas, nor in any scripture. I do not believe in anything spiritual."

The Master indulgently replied, "My son, if you had said that to any other Guru what would have happened to you? But go in peace! Others have passed through these trials before you. Look at Naren! He believes. Your doubts will also be enlightened. You will believe."

And Kaliprasad later became the holy apostle, Abhedananda. Many university men, sceptics and agnostics, were similarly touched by this little man, who said the simplest things in his peasant's language, but whose inner light pierced to the depths of the soul. (Romain Rolland's, "The Life of Ramakrishna", pp. 291-292).

Book learning is not a necessary qualification in a disciple, nor high birth nor social status. One of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples, Latu by name, was a servant boy and uneducated, yet he became one of the best known among Sri Ramakrishna's disciples. Later he became Swami Adbhutananda. Sex is not much of a consideration in the life spiritual, and both men and women have

equal claims on spiritual Sādhana. Sri Ramakrishna had many women disciples, chief of whom was Sri Sarda Devi whom he had married when she was quite young, but whose wedded life was a long poem of utter purity, devoted service and profound realization. Sri Ramakrishna's compassion overflowed to the sinners and the spiritually starved, and none came unto him who did not receive from him the healing touch, the assuring word, the saving grace.

Śrī Sankaracharya in his *Vivekāchūḍāmaṇi* enumerates the qualities that are necessary for discipleship, and also the excellences that mark a true Guru. The disciple should distinguish between the real and the false, must have dispassion for worldly things, must

cultivate calmness and allied qualities, must pant for liberation. He must realize the glory of human birth and feel that life without God-realization is a waste. Let us first try earnestly to acquire these qualities. Let us then search for a true Guru who must be versed in the spirit of the Vedas, devoid of sin, desireless, a Brahmajñāni, full of mercy and willing to help.

When discipleship is ripe in us, the Guru is bound to be found. And when having become true disciples we find our true Guru, let us surrender ourselves completely unto him in this belief:

न गुरोरपि तत्त्वं, न गुरोरपि तपः ।

"There is no higher truth than the Guru, no higher penance than (service to) the Guru."

The Basic Lines of Ancient Indian Ethics, Economics and Politics-II

(Continued from the previous number)

BY JAYENDRARAY BHAGWANLAL DURKAL, M. A.

IDEA OF ECONOMICS

The word 'Economics' reminds one of a shrewd cynic who has described language as 'the instrument of hiding thoughts'. In its ordinary import 'Economics' should mean the art or science of 'economy' which means again the frugal use of resources for widest results or utilities. But Economics instead of being a science for economy has become the science dealing with the production and accumulation of wealth. Of course the conservation of wealth is an idea which seems like other conservative notions to have been tabooed

for all practical purposes. The ancient Indians had no such science as modern economics which has shown during a couple of hundreds of years a wonderful capacity to increase artificial money, national debts, labour disorders and general discontent. The 'Artha Śāstra' of India had a wider connotation. It referred to that *Object of Life* which provides for the common needs. On the individual side it included the Art of self-preservation and on the social side it meant the Art of governance and protection of groups, i. e., Politics. The ancient Indians do not seem to have

disregarded or slighted wealth in social polity as well as individual concerns. What they seem to have done is that they put down material wealth on a very low scale in life putting as they did, Virtue and Valour above Wealth. They could have said with Shakespeare "Who steals my purse steals trash." They refrained from giving artificial stimulus to the accumulation of wealth by legislation. Wealth, they knew, would accumulate even without it and they provided rather for its distribution. The great instruments of distribution were Yajñas or Sacrifices in the case of Princes, building of temples, inns and wells in the case of magnates and cater-dinners in the case of the middle classes.

REACTIONS OF THE IDEAL OF LIFE

But the greatest economic values were achieved by the upholding of the ideal of Renunciation. The Sannyāsī or ascetic held the most honourable and adorable rank in public life. Kings and princes bowed unto him. The learned Brahman was careless of wealth. Kings were honoured and eulogized for their liberality. Even so late as the last century, instances of princes like Sri Vibha, Jam of Nawanagar, who gave away anything and everything to the needy, were not uncommon. "Nothing is really yours. Wealth is fleeting. What you give, you have gained." That was the philosophy. This general attitude towards wealth was infused by the general attitude towards life to which we have referred before. For the great ends of life wealth was rather a hindrance than help. But all the same wealth was not disregarded. It was greed of wealth that was set up

as a weakness. Honesty in trade and business was extolled. Out of the four aims of Life, viz., (1) Dharma or Righteousness, (2) Artha or Means of life, (3) Kāma or Desires and (4) Mokṣa or Salvation, the second was not to run counter to the last. "I am the Desire", says Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, "that is not opposed to Dharma". There is the story of Tuladhār in the *Mahābhārata* which sets down honesty in trade (which is described as a 'mixture of truth and falsehood') as a virtue higher than physical purity and austerity. It was true, no doubt, that wealth was a possible and convenient play-ground for vice. But as the ancient Rsis of India accepted the *self-control philosophy of life*, they were hardly led into the scramble for wealth for luxuries, much less into abnormal ways for amassing fortunes.

ECONOMIC DICRA

The same ideal which worked in morals worked in economics also. "Simplify, Reduce, Donate, Abnegate" that was the spirit pervading all public life. Necessities of life were not to be increased and they were no index of civilization. It was realized that higher standards of life meant a greater burden of life, which in its turn meant a greater waste of energy. It would ultimately mean a keener struggle for existence and greater public discontent. There were to be not only few necessities of life but they were to be provided for, by obnoxious methods in general. Thus great Chakras or big machinery was taboo. Manu expressly forbids their use. The necessities of life were kept at the lowest possible level of cheapness.

Hence labour also was cheap. Only a century hence, the labourers' daily wages were about two pence per day. The sovereign could take no more than one sixth of the produce from the agriculturist. And thus the income became naturally the boundary line of state expenditure. Taxes were almost unknown. All these things tended to make life easy. They made for a more general and generous distribution of wealth. Religion and social festivals also provided for liberal donations to the poor.

ECONOMICS IN RELATION TO POLITICS

Money or wealth was not the basis of the Constitution, there being no democratic or parliamentary government and therefore no franchise on a monetary basis. The various vocations had come to be stabilized and concentrated in particular groups, which formed themselves usually into castes inter-dining and inter-marrying within their own group. The industries therefore had no tendency to expand by competition and wealth-hankering, and they came to be confined more or less to the respective castes. This state of things has come down even to our own times. Even now the potters, the goldsmiths, the blacksmiths, the dyers, the barbers and the washermen form different castes by themselves in many parts of India. As on the one hand, there was no growth, there was, on the other, no trouble of competition, no risk of over-production. The burning or sinking of tons of coffee on economic grounds was an undreamt of phenomenon. These castes may be said to resemble the modern trade-corporations, with the difference that

those were hereditary. The wealth came to be thus distributed through the family, the caste and the state. Undue desire for high profits or wealth was regarded as illegitimate, because wealth was regarded and allowed or encouraged only as a means to normal life, not as a means to dissipation.

THE FAMILY HOME

Another basic principle of Indian economy was *self-sufficiency*. The state, the town, the village was to be self-sufficient. It did not covet the neighbour's wealth, but it was well-organized to produce and keep up its own. Even the private home shared this wholesome tendency. It had its own terrace, its own well or pond, its own cow-shed and a little courtyard for vegetation. Family was the smallest social unit and it consisted not only of 'He, She and children', but of parents, brothers and usually even cousins, aunts and other still more distant relatives who were unable to support themselves. It was a great experiment in religious socialism, and it has succeeded in India; for, it is a living thing even today. It is, no doubt, based, worked and kept up by the same forces of self-control, discipline, charity, self-abnegation and spirit of brotherly service, mutual affection and co-operation. The head of the family is respected and is the family representative at the caste meetings. The earning members of the family put their earnings in the joint stock from which is maintained the whole family. Thus the joint family formed by itself a castle of protection, a school of discipline and a little kingdom with unity of culture, unity of board and unity of interest.

RICHES FOR LIFE'S NEEDS

Wealth, we have already noted, was not condemned in itself. Lakṣmī, the great Goddess of female Trinity, is the Goddess of Wealth. It was cupidity that men were called upon to renounce. The basic material of strife is lust and cupidity and it was the dismantling of the ideal of 'wealth and woman' as a *summum bonum* that made for the peace, purity and benevolence of the Hindu society. Nor was greater production and exploitation of wealth to be the aim of the State. Cupidity was not the less harmful by being enthroned in government or sovereignty. Wealth was, in the normal scheme of Life, for its necessities, not for its luxuries, much less for its degradation and strife. In economics too, the same principle of simplify, reduce, abnegate, was the inspiring force. It eliminated excessive competition on the one hand and intensive production on the other. Artificial aids of tariff-legislation, elaborate machinery and control of labour became out of place. The gospel of abstinence and self-dependence was so true and forceful that it infected, or shall we say, evangelized the whole human race and became under the inspiration of Prophets and Saints, the rule and line of the world. We need hardly mention that within a short period of the last two or three hundred years we have been able to see the risks and dangers of the rule and line of the alternative route.

THE BASIC LINES OF POLITICS: THE ORIGIN OF THE STATE

The origin of the State in a consolidated form was, according to the Indian

theory, posterior to the origin of society. The existence of the State as an embodiment of power to rule and to protect, presupposes the existence of strife due to conflicts of ideals, interests and passions. In the earlier stages man being like the child innocent, straightforward and unsophisticated, he hardly needed the coercion of the State. Family was the natural unit and the family-head was naturally the friend, guide and philosopher of the family. But in course of time, with the multiplication of the race and the development of conflicting passions and cupidity, mutual attacks and robberies made the State necessary. The king was thus brought into existence for the protection of the people by the divine will. This kingship was hereditary and the king was enjoined to protect the people in their own respective parts of duty.

THE INSTITUTION OF MONARCHY

The hereditary nature of kingship was highly serviceable not only for continuing the traits of heredity but also for the training of the king. The king was to be enlightened in the Vedas or knowledge Divine, and he was to protect the people in accordance with justice. In the monarchic system we again perceive the same tendency of the Aryan mind to follow the clues of nature. The universe is a monarchy. The very basis of science is the uniformity of its legislation, behind which is the Unity of the Governing Power. That governing power is divine and the same divine power was the source of laws which man was to obey. The divinely inspired Manu, an incarnation or manifestation of God, was therefore their great consti-

tution-maker and law-giver. The people's interests were to be supreme and the people were to be ruled in accordance with, as Manu says, their respective religious duties. Religion was, in fact, the law of life and it was the end for which the state was the means. The king being thus the highest constitutional power to validate and protect the greatest interest of life, he was sanctified by religion. The Brahman gave him everyday, at dinner-time, his personal tribute by a symbolic religious rite.

THEOCRATIC CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

The principal functions of the sovereign were executive and judicial. The divine law was the basic law. The Royal Staff which was the symbol of Rule, was also the symbol of Protection. The future of man and the state was not left at the mercy of man's changing likes, lights, lures, licenses and judgments. They were not to be made politically-minded, but religiously-minded. They were not involved as active agents in the state. They were not involved in the government and therefore the responsibility for wars was not on them. On the other hand the king was expected to meet his ministers and subjects in the Durbar and to hear what they had to say from time to time. The king's powers were limited also in another way. He was to be guided not only by the ministers but also by a saintly adviser of experience like Vasiṣṭha, who was in the position of an elder or preceptor to the king. He advised him on great matters of the state and his advice was to be followed by the king.

This preceptor or Guru had no constitutional powers but his saintly and disinterested advice could be neglected by the king only at his peril. There are examples of king Vena and others who came to grief and death for acting in a headlong manner in defiance of religion, or morality. "The Royal staff can be held by him who is pure, truthful, faithful to the Śāstras, well-supported and talented", says the divine law-giver Manu. The cardinal object of the creation of the king has been thus described:-

"The king had been created as the all-round protector of all the people following their own religion or duties of their classes and stages in due order."

(*Manu* VII. 35)

There are details of "don'ts" for the king and details for ministers and their functions. It was the spirit of piety and righteousness that was fundamentally required of the king. He was expected to be possessed of very good manners and insolence in a king was considered a great weakness. The ancient great Indian princes like Harīchandra, Rāma, Janaka and Yudhiṣṭhīra scrupulously followed the great ideal. Sivaji, the founder of the Maratha Empire and Pratap, the Rāṇī of Udayapur, in modern times, and princes of some of the native states even today have been striving to approach the ideal. They have parental affection towards their subjects and saintly devotion towards their religion. They treat all religions with respect realizing therein the security, hope and order of the human race.

LEARNING AS THE DOMINANT PRINCIPLE

The details of the government need not detain us. We shall pass on to the

other great basic lines which differentiated and hallmark'd the ancient Indian Polity. Next to the signalization and sanctification of Theocratic Constitutional Monarchy we have the principle of culture and learning prevailing in the State. According to Manu even one excellent Brahman, learned in the Vedas, is sufficient to interpret the Dharma or standards of righteousness, but not even thousands of those who are ignorant of the same. A learned Brahman is further said to be one who not only knows the Śāstras but can interpret them in line with Reason. Every thinker knows that we have to find our fundamental premises from a super-rational or extra-rational source, and this source was Revelation in the ancient Indian polity. This position puts democracy out of count. It puts the notion of Equality still more out of count. Men were unequal in their intellectual and moral judgment as well as in their physical, mental and spiritual capacities. The value of one vote was not equal to that of the other. To valuate the votes or opinions equally was the way to misguidance and could result in all the mischief of wrong scales and wrong weights. Further, as a corollary, this view discountenances the rule of majority and the rule of the ballot-box which besides being wrongly weighed might mean the tyranny of a strong-minded majority over a big minority, and even civil war in the last resort. People under the Indian system are to be governed neither by majority nor by dictatorial minorities. They are to be governed by the stable constitution which goes by the rule and line of the respective religion which they

themselves have *voluntarily* chosen to follow.

WAR AND CONQUESTS

The ancient Indian sages seem to have neither interdicted conquest nor commended war. They were neither pacifists nor militarists either by convenience or by principle. They met the needs of human ambitions in quite a wonderful way. It was the way of royal sacrifices as the Rājasūya or Aśwamedha. But these were not mere sacrifices. They were challenges of a covert nature to the princes and kings round about. The ambitious prince or king was, in an Aśwamedha sacrifice, to set free a horse to roam about, with the army following it all through. The countries where it roamed were either to exhibit friendly relations with the great Potentate or submit to him or to tie up the horse and challenge a battle. The horse was in fact the emblem of the monarch's sovereignty. Thus they provided not only for the ambition of a powerful potentate but also for the recognition and spread of an integral culture. Thus the great ideal of the State as an instrument for the spread of righteousness was kept up. Even the battles that took place had to be waged according to strict rules of equality, the horseman fighting with horseman and the foot-soldier with foot-soldier. It was as great a disgrace to act unrighteously on the field of battle as to fly away from it. Women were not to take part in warfare, neither the Brahmins, nor usually the Vaiśyas. Conscription was impossible on the very ground of religion which was sacred even to the State. A system akin to the feudal system was

evolved and it supplied the king with his armies. Armies could be mobilized but wars were not so bitter, prolonged and inequitous as in our own times. The religious atmosphere of those ages valued more the peace of the soul than the possessions of the earth. The values are perhaps true even today but they were brought home to the people then by their men of light and leading.

CHARACTER OF THE STATE

The ancient ideal of the Indian State presents various features of the modern State in a unique combination. It was a totalitarian State as opposed to a parliamentary democracy; but its basis was not the will of the dictator but the law of religion. It had the essence of democracy, in the sense that it was for the people's good and according to the tacit consent of the people who by accepting a religion had by implication accepted its scheme of life. It was constitutional limited monarchy as opposed to absolute monarchy or dictatorship, either of a leader or of the proletariat. It was constitutionally bound up and limited by religious texts, ministerial cabinets, and guardian Rsis. In its basis it was a theocracy while in its working it was a monarchy. In actual practice it came to be an aristocracy of virtue and talents. The kingship being hereditary it may be contrasted in its advantage of preliminary education and training to the king, with the haphazard mentality and ideas of a Dictator or President sitting over the destinies of a people. In reality, the ancient system may be said to be the noblest form of democracy, being

government by the noblest and best of the people and according to the creed of the people's own hearts. That it continued in India for thousands of years and is continuing partly in some states of India even today is a tribute to its worth and value. The unique fusion of those valued elements, made for its popularity as well as longevity and stability. Under the ancient ideal, the State is the expression of Divinity, *for the evolution of Divinity, by the law of Divinity.* It was understood to be concerned with interests and lives too sacred and too valuable to be disposed of by the fleeting passions, prejudices and whims of majorities, minorities or mixtures. We see in the ancient idea of the State, the rule of law instead of the cry for liberty, the recognition of hierarchy of good, medium and evil instead of the push for Equality, we find the practical ideal of the family and castes instead of the theoretical cry of Fraternity, and the institution of benevolent hereditary monarchy instead of an ever-exploiting ever-changing democracy. There is one fundamental difference in the visions of the ancients and the moderns which made for a complete difference in the outlook of life. The good and the evil were not uncertain and problematic, neither undetermined nor undeterminable to the ancient Indian sages. The easiest way of heading to a chaos or a Babel of Misunderstandings is the rejection of the truths and teachings derived from Divinity. The decision of the ancients on the issue of liberty was clear. Liberty? Yes, full liberty to go the right way, no liberty to go the wrong way. Democracy

in the sense of the rule of the people by a majority of members elected by the ballot-box was fundamentally erroneous, and giving power as it did to the majority which would be easily amenable to looser inclinations, (either its own or of its constituency) and quite likely to turn its back on the minority or minorities. The problem whether one man can represent another, nay, can even represent a host of others with different opinions and inclinations was a fundamental one, which the ancient

system was not forced to meet. Even, as we say that the people will be certainly guided by the best counsellors amongst them, we really throw the modern democratic principle overboard. But it is not for us to enter into the merits of the various systems. Suffice it to say that the ancient system of politics was in tune with Nature and in tune with the Infinite. It has proved itself to be perennial and popular. It has been found by experience to be stable and civilizing *

Sidelights

VISHNUPRASAD V. BAXI, M.A.

1. "Beggars cannot be choosers" is the law of the world. Beggars can be choosers is the law of God. 'Ask and Ye shall receive' says the Lord. 'Ask and you shall remain the same for the asking' says the world. The world hates its beggars. God loves His beggars. The world seeks protection from its beggars: God protects them. The world uses them as its foot-stool: God keeps them on His throne. Do not be a beggar before the world. It has nothing to give. Be a beggar before God. He has everything to give. The world does not part with its possessions. God gives all. He asks his devotees to choose a boon and whatever he chooses he receives. In the world of God beggars are always choosers and receive in abundance. For, he who is a beggar before God, rejects the world. The world rejects him and

whatever the world rejects, God accepts. Beggary for Divine Grace is strength; beggary for worldly possessions is weakness.

2. A foolish beggar moved about the world crying for alms. But he kept his beggar's bowl upside down. The world mocked him for he did not know how to hold his bowl. He quarrelled with the world for its ingratitude and made himself the more miserable. Then someone put him right. He kept his bowl straight and he found it full. He had no quarrel with the world.

Man acts oftentimes like this foolish beggar. He asks God for His Grace; he prays for wealth and happiness; he undertakes penances for securing his happiness and quarrels with God when his cries are not answered. But he does

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not realize that the bowl of his heart has not turned Godwards to receive His bounty, which is his for the asking. The bowl of the heart is turned earthwards and in ignorance he wants it to be filled. Till self-knowledge puts him right and his heart is open to receive God's gifts, his prayers are not answered. 'God is not mocked' says the Lord. Do not try to deceive God and His world by asking for things when you do not know how to receive them. Turn your heart and mind Godwards. He is the Giver of Life and everlasting Bliss. Know how to receive and you will not then quarrel with the world or with God.

3. A coloured garment gets soiled as quickly as a white one. But while the former absorbs dirt the latter exposes it at once. The wearer of a coloured garment deludes himself into believing that the garment is not soiled and does not require to be cleansed. The wearer of a white garment realizes this in no time and is given the opportunity to remove the dirt and to avoid moving in filthy surroundings. Do not let your mind put on the garments coloured with the heavy shades of this material world. The faster the colour the lesser the chances of its fading out. Robe the mind in white garments of Love, Devotion, Charity, Understanding, etc. You will know when the garment of the mind is soiled and your knowledge will enable you to keep it clean and to avoid unclean surroundings. Clothe the mind and the heart with the white mantle of God and not the coloured robes of the world. The one is grand in its simplicity; the other is vulgar in its variety. Dress your

mind properly. A well dressed body clings to the earth; a well dressed mind clings to God. Dress the mind in white for, whiteness is purity and purity is Divinity.

4. A bat loves to move in darkness. It is blinded by light. Its restless nature does not allow it to lie flat and rest. It wants something to hang on and when it hangs it clings to its support head downwards. Take it out into the light. It will lose its restlessness and lie flat.

The mind of man is like a bat. Restlessness is its nature. It loves to move in the darkness of ignorance and avoids the light of knowledge. It clings to material possessions head downwards towards the earth. Take it out into the light of knowledge and its restlessness ceases. It lies flat in peace. It cannot see the light first and will be blinded by its splendour. But gradually it will get used to light and will ask for more light. He who wants the light of Divine Grace, let him bring his mind out of darkness of ignorance. For, Light is Life: perpetual darkness is death. Live by the light alone and avoid darkness.

5. He who swims with the current of the water never reaches the shore and perishes in the attempt. He who swims across the current reaches the shore and saves himself because he knows the art of swimming. The river of life flows between the shores of God. If you want to cross it and reach the Divine Shore do not swim with the current. You will perish. Cut across the current of the world and you reach the shore. An adept swimmer swims on the surface of the water. He floats for hours on end

without moving his limbs and, therefore, does not exhaust himself. He does not care for the course of the current or its force for he knows his strength and is confident to reach the shore whenever it pleases him. And whenever he reaches the shore, glory and joy are his. One must know how to float on the surface of life's current. He can then reach the goal. Do not exhaust yourself in the attempt to swim with the current of the world. You cannot avoid its deep dark waters. Learn to float on its surface and cultivate faith in your power to reach the shore and the still waters with their unfathomable depths can do you no harm. Keep your eyes on the shores of Divinity and God will protect you. Eternal joy and Glory will be yours when you have crossed the current of life.

6 "Truth is the speech of inward purity" says the writer. Be true and the world will not deceive you. Deception

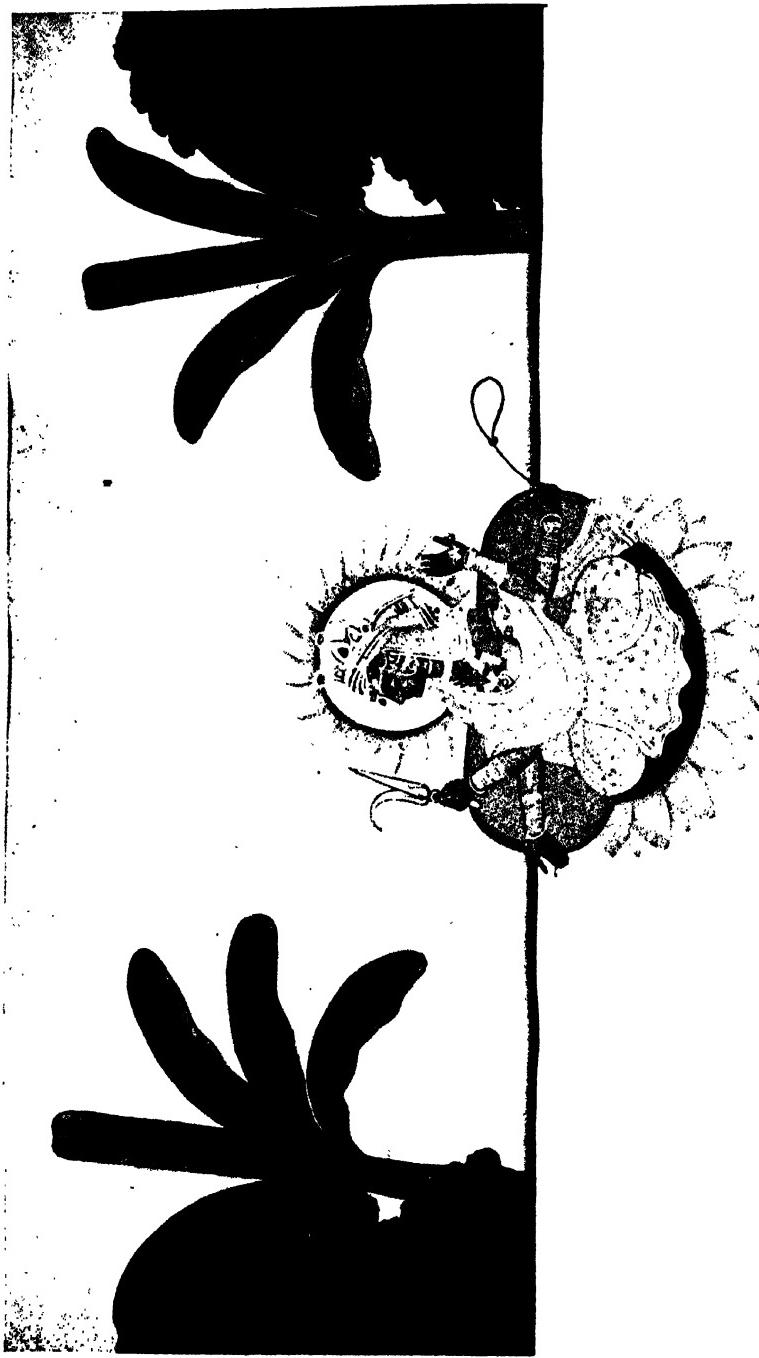
is a vice of the soul. Shun it. Truth is not externalization but internalization. Dwell within. As Browning says:—

'Truth is within ourselves,
It takes no rise from outward things
whate'er you may believe;
There is an inmost centre in us all
Where Truth abides in fullness.'

Look to this inward centre. Draw the truth from within and happiness will be yours. God is Truth. Truth leads to self-knowledge and self-knowledge to self-reverence. Learn to reverence yourself and you will learn to be true. Truth will burn the dross of the world and make the lamp of faith burn brighter. All your actions will become pure and you will proceed from strength to strength once you learn to be true. Truth is the way of Life that leads one to the gate of Heaven. It fits him for a closer union with God. Be true.

Every day, or twice a day, at regular times, if possible, we should make a practice of becoming very quiet and restful, so that our mental activities quieten down and our breathing becomes slow and deep. Then we should form a mental concept of an ideal life of order, harmony, beauty and peace. If we can "feel" ourselves, as it were, being carried along on the River of Divine Bounty and Providence, with all the Divine Forces and Heavenly Agencies ministering to us, also with every needed blessing coming to us (and wanting to come to us), just at the right time, then, by so doing, we make powerful use of the Hidden Powers—the Powers which transcend both the mental and the physical.

The Kalyana-Kalpataru



ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावश्यते ॥



KALYANAM KALPATARU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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या श्रीः स्वयं सुकृतिनां भवनेष्वलक्ष्मीः
पापात्मनां कृतधियां हृदयेषु बुद्धिः ।
श्रद्धा सत्ता कुलजनप्रभवस्य लज्जा
तां त्वां नताः स परिपालय देवि विश्वम् ॥

(*Märkandeyaapurāna*)

"You who are Yourself prosperity in the mansions of the virtuous, poverty in the hovels of the sinful, judgment in the hearts of those who are of chastened minds, faith in the good and bashfulness in the well-born—to You do we make obeisance; Goddess, protect the universe."

Dialogue With The Lord During Meditation—III

(Continued from the previous number)

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

P. O Lord, meditation on Your Form appeals to my heart also. But the mind is unsteady. It runs away quickly hither and thither. How shall I account for this?

L. Owing to attachment the mind finds a pleasure in the enjoyment of worldly things. It has become a store of the impressions of Karma of many lives. These do not allow the mind to become steady.

P. Why does it dwell on useless things which serve no purpose of mine and for which I have no particular attachment?

L. By nature the mind is fickle and unsteady. It is its habit to dwell on useless things and it finds a pleasure in such thoughts. This is also a form of attachment, that is why it dwells on such thoughts.

P. What is to be done to remedy this?

L. The mind should be carefully watched that it may not leave the meditation of My Form and take to thoughts of worldly things. If that is not sufficient to prevent the continuation of such thoughts, it should be expostulated or forcibly withdrawn from such thoughts, and employed again and again with determination in the meditation of My Form.

P. How can the mind be withdrawn from thoughts of other things?

L. When a small child picks up a sharp knife, the mother expostulates with the child and removes the knife from its hands. If the child due to ignorance and foolishness begins to resist the mother, the mother will be indifferent to its cries and forcibly take away the knife. Even so, the mind should be remonstrated and cured of its habit of pursuing worldly thoughts; for it is as fickle and unsteady as a small child. It does not and cannot consider the harm its vagaries may bring one in the future.

P. One may not even know when the mind will give him the slip and quickly grasp an object. What should one do to remedy this?

L. Just as a mother constantly keeps watch over her child, even so the mind should be watched.

P. But the mind is fickle, strong and wayward, therefore it appears extremely difficult to control it.

L. True, it is somewhat difficult to control, but not so difficult as you imagine it to be. For it can be brought under control through effort. The difficulty of the task should not make one despair. The mother never considers the task of protecting her child

difficult. If she does so, the protection of her child will be impossible.

P. Is the mind exactly like a small child?

L. No, it is stronger and more wayward than a child.

P. Then, how is it to be brought under control?

L. It can be brought under control, for the intellect is more powerful than the mind, and you (the soul) is still more powerful. Just as a mother controls her small child either with the help of a grown-up daughter or holding some temptation before it, and if the child still persists to be wayward she changes its course from evil to good by a show of threat, even so, the mind has to be restrained through the intellect by showing it the evil effects of a life of enjoyment. Thus withdrawing it from the perishable, transient objects of the world, it should be fixed again and again on Me.

P. However much I may try on this line, I do not see any prospect of victory.

L. Persevere, even if you do not attain victory. Do not get depressed. When you have My support, there is no cause for despair. Have faith that if you continue the fight, ultimately the victory is sure to be yours.

P. O Lord, when I retire to a solitary place and attempt to fix the mind in meditation on You, sleep and lethargy begin to trouble me. Please tell me what I should do to get over this difficulty?

L. The food you take should be light and pure. You should sit still in a Yogic posture, e. g., the Lotus or Swastika posture without feeling any inconvenience, keeping your spine erect and fixing the sight on the tip of the nose. Then you should offer prayers and chant hymns in praise of Me. You should go on repeatedly chanting and bringing to your mind whatever you have heard from the lips of the saints and read in the scriptures about the glory of My Name, Form, virtues, sports and powers. This will cause the growth of the pure Sattvic sentiment and bring awakening to the intellect. When this awakening takes place, sleep and lethargy, which are the expressions of Tamoguna, cannot exercise any influence.

P. O Lord, you have said in the *Gita* that Your realization becomes easy when one takes to constant remembrance of You, for You then quickly deliver one from the ocean of metempsychosis by giving protection to his spiritual practices and remedying the deficiencies in them. But it does not appear to me that Your realization is so easy or can be achieved so quickly as You describe it to be.

L. You do not practise constant remembrance of Me, therefore My realization appears difficult to you.

P. I admit, Lord, that what You say is true. Through constant remembrance of You, Your realization may be both quick and easy. But constant remembrance itself is a difficult affair. How is this habit to be developed?

L. The practice of constant remembrance appears difficult to you because you do not know My virtues, power, truth and mystery. As a matter of fact, it is not so difficult.

P. Please tell me what are Your virtues, power, truth and mystery.

L. Equanimity, peace, compassion, love, forbearance, sweetness, tenderness, gravity, liberality, friendliness, etc.,—these are My virtues. Entire greatness, strength, glory, brilliance, power, ability and the capacity to render possible what is otherwise impossible—these are My glory. Just as atoms of water, steam, cloud, drops of rain, hail, etc., all are but different forms of water, even so whatever exists, with attributes and without attributes, with form and without form, manifest and unmanifest, matter and spirit, animate and inanimate, and whatever is beyond these, all are but Me. This is the truth about Me. To believe that through My very sight, through the hearing of My voice, through My touch, remembrance, Kirtana, worship, obeisance and offering of praises to Me, even a sinner gets exceptionally pure; and to recognize Me, the Supreme, Omniscient, Almighty Being, though equally present everywhere, yet walking as a human being in the form of an Incarnation—this is My mystery or secret.

P. How are these to be known?

L. In the beginning of its career in school, a small child tries to avoid learning its lessons, but with the growth of age and experience when it comes to realize the virtue, glory, truth and secret of learning, it begins to

engage itself in study with great devotion and enthusiasm. Then, it would not leave its study even when asked to do so. Similarly through Satsanga or association with the good, and practices of Bhajana, meditation, etc., man can learn My virtues, glory, secret, etc. Then he attains such an amount of joy and peace that he would not leave it even if requested to do so.

P. O Lord, when engaged in Your constant remembrance, is it possible for a man to engage his body and senses to work according to Your instructions?

L. Through determined practice it is possible. Though the mind of the tortoise is concentrated on its eggs, of the cow on its calf, of a lustful person on his lady love, of a greedy man on his wealth, of the chauffeur driving a car on the road before him, of a rope-dancer on the balance of his feet, yet they carry on other activities through their bodies and senses, even so, it is possible for a practicant to carry on external activities through the body and senses, according to My instructions, while engaged in constant remembrance of Me.

P. What are Your instructions?

L. Elevating scriptures, sayings of saints, good impulses bubbling up within the heart—these are My instructions. When differences are observed in these three, one should adopt a course in which two of them agree, regarding that to be My instruction.

P. What should be done when the opinions of all the three are found to be different?

L. In that case, the saying of a saint should be given preference.

P. Would it not mean disrespect to the scriptures?

L. No, the saint can never say anything which is contrary to the scriptures. It is difficult for the ordinary man to determine the meaning of the scriptures; the saint alone knows the application of a scriptural instruction according to time and place. That is why whatever is shown by the saint is the right path.

P. What is the harm if one regards the good impulses of the heart as a Divine injunction?

L. One may do so. But the impulses should correspond to the instructions of the scriptures and sayings of saints. It is necessary for a practicant to submit himself to a discipline, for otherwise if due to ignorance he begins to regard the Rajasic and Tamasic impulses as Sattvic in character, he may lose all restraint and suffer a spiritual fall.

P. What do You mean by scriptures here?

L. All books composed by the R̄sis, e. g., the Śrutiś, Smṛtiś, Itihāsaś and Purāṇaś, etc., are scriptures. In case of difference of view between two books of scripture, preference should be given to the Śrutiś. For the Smṛtiś, Itihāsaś and Purāṇaś—all these are based on the Śrutiś.

P. It is difficult for ordinary men to acquire knowledge of the Śrutiś, Smṛtiś and all other scriptures. By what should they go under the circumstance?

L. They should depend on Mahāpuruṣaś who have knowledge of the scriptures.

P. Who should be regarded as a Mahāpuruṣa?

L. He whom you regard from your heart as the best of men is a Mahāpuruṣa for you.

P. O Lord, I may make a mistake in my judgment and may be deceived thereby.

L. You need not worry over this. He who surrenders himself to Me, receives My protection from all points of view.

P. O Lord, what is the standard by which I shall judge a Mahāpuruṣa? What are the marks of a Mahāpuruṣa?

L. The great soul in which the marks described in the *Gītā* chapter II, verses 55–71 as the marks of a man of stable wisdom, chapter VI, verses 7–9 as marks of a Yogi, chapter XII, verses 13–19 as marks of a devotee, chapter XIV, verses 22–25 as marks of one who has risen above the guṇaś are found is a Mahāpuruṣa.

P. It is most difficult to come in contact with such a Mahāpuruṣa. What is to be done under the circumstance?

L. In that case the *Gītā* which contains My instructions to Arjuna and is the essence of all scriptures and easy to understand by all, should be made the guide.

P. What are the verses which should be principally kept in view by the practicant while developing his virtues and regulating his conduct?

L. There are many verses in the *Gītā* which can be made one's guide. One's life should be regulated particularly according to verses 7 to 11 of chapter XIII where wisdom is described, verses 1 to 3 of chapter XVI where the divine qualities are described, and verses 14 to 17 of chapter XVII where penances are described.

P. O Lord, You have said that one should ever remain pleased with every dispensation of Yours. What do You really mean by this ?

L. It means one should feel delighted through every experience of life, viz., pleasure or pain, gain or loss, experience agreeable or disagreeable, taking it to be a gift specially sent by Me.

P. Pleasure is not always felt when these experiences are gone through. What is the reason for this ?

L. People do not know this truth and secret that every dispensation of Mine is an expression of My compassion.

P. Pleasurable possessions of the world like wife, children, wealth, a comfortable house, etc., create infatuation and attachment and cause bondage to man. Why do You make man possessor of these things ? In what way is the secret of Your compassion to be detected in this dispensation ?

L. Just as a king when calling a friend sends a car to bring him, even so as the result of past virtues I make man possessor of worldly objects like wife, children, wealth, house, etc., for service of others and making others happy and for the growth of right conduct, virtues and Love for Me so that he may sooner

come to Me. To understand this is to know the secret of My grace.

P. When wife, children, wealth, etc., are lost, how is Your grace to be detected in their loss ?

L. When due to infatuation and attachment insects fall into a flame and are reduced to ashes, a kind-hearted man observing their miserable plight puts out the flame. Although the insects may not know it, the action is an expression of supreme compassion for them. Even so, it should be known to be an act of My supreme grace when objects of enjoyment, which cause bondage to man and drag him down to hell, are destroyed.

P. Why do You endow man with health, strength and intellectual power, etc. ?

L. I endow man with these powers so that he may know My virtues, glory, truth and secret through Satsanga, selfless service and constant practice of Bhajana and meditation, etc.

P. How is one to see Your grace when afflicted with illness, danger, etc. ?

L. Through the experience of illness, danger, etc., man works out the effects of previous sin, and sorrow or the bitter experience of life acts as a check to the commission of sin in future. Fear of death causes dispassion for the body and aids My remembrance. If the sufferings of a disease are gone through in the spirit of performing a penance, they may lead to My realization. The development of this attitude means seeing My grace.

P. Your grace is apparent when one contacts a Mahapuruṣa, but how is

P. Your grace to be seen when one loses that contact ?

L. Man realizes the value of a light when the light is removed from him. When contact with a Mahāpuruṣa is lost, it should be understood that I arrange this in order to develop in him desire to meet him again, and develop love for him, and I make the practicant realize how rare and treasurable is the contact with a Mahāpuruṣa.

P. Your grace is apparent when You bring about separation from wicked men of evil conduct, for thereby You save one from evil association. But why do You throw one into evil company even against one's desire or inclination ?

L. I throw one into such association in order to give him an idea of the evil effects of vice, so that he may develop distaste for vice and evil conduct. But remember, when one deliberately cultivates evil association, it is not arranged by Me.

P. How is Your grace to be seen during association with, and separation from, ordinary men ?

L. Association with them is arranged for their service and for cultivation of love and compassion for them, and separation is arranged for cultivation of detachment for them and for constant practice of Bhajana and meditation in seclusion. To understand this is to see My grace.

P. How is Your grace to be seen in difficulties like entanglement in civil or criminal suits, which disturb moral

principles and practices of Bhajana and meditation.

L. The practices of morality, Bhajana and meditation are disturbed when one is subject to lust, anger, greed, infatuation, fear, weakness, etc. He who looks upon these difficulties as gifts from Me, and while facing them does not fall from morality and rectitude, virtues like firmness, courage, gravity, etc., which lead to the growth of soul-force, increase in him. To understand this is to see My grace.

P. Why do You deprive a devotee of worldly honour, name and fame ? What is the secret of it ?

L. I do so with a view to awaken him from the sleep of Ignorance, to remove the hindrances in the path of his spiritual Sādhanā, and displacing hypocrisy, to develop in him devotion in its genuine form. This is the secret.

P. What is the special form of Your grace ?

L. Memory of, and desire for, and actual practice of Bhajana, meditation, selfless service, Satsanga, virtues and right conduct—these are the special forms of My grace.

P. When such is the case, one should treat all these dispensations of Yours, arranged according to one's Karma, as gifts from You, and feel charmed and delighted every moment.

L. That is so, but the pity is that people do not understand it.

P. What should one do to understand this ?

L. One should constantly remember My Name and Form with consciousness of their power and glory, practise disinterested Karma according to My

instructions maintaining My remembrance, and associate with saints who have knowledge of the secret of My grace. (*Kalyan*)

(Concluded)

The Stealing of Gopis' Butter and Garments

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

वर्हापीँ नटवरवपुः कर्णयोः कर्णिकारं
विभ्रद् वासः कनकपिशं वैजयतीं च मालाम् ।
रम्बान् वेणोरभरसुधया पूरयन् गोपदून्दै—
वृन्दारण्यं स्वपद्रमणं प्राविशद् गीतकीर्तिः ॥
(*Bhāgavata* X. xxi. 5)

"Graced with peacock's feather, looking like an excellent actor, wearing Karnikāra flowers, putting on golden clothes and Vaijayanti garland, filling the holes of His reed with the nectar of His lips, accompanied by companies of Gopas, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose glory is widely sung, entered Brindaban charming with His footprints."

The privilege of Knowledge of the mystery and secret of the divine and sweet sports of God, the embodiment of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, is gained only by very few people. Just as the Lord is Consciousness itself, even so His sports are manifestations of Consciousness. The supremely high stage of the transcendental region where these sports take place has this peculiarity that they are not usually manifested in the pure Brahmic state. That is why even saints, who have realized Brahma, cannot enjoy the sweetness of these sports. The real manifestation of these supremely brilliant Divine sports take place in the

very heart of the Bliss-aspect of God, embodied as Śrī Rādhā and Her various aspects embodied as the Love-intoxicated Gopis, and they alone deprived of all trappings, which separate one from God, enjoy the sweet taste of this most intimate Līlā of God.

When considering the Divine sports, one should remember that God's Abode, the participants in those sports and the Divine Form engaged in the sports, are not creations of Prakṛti or Matter. In God there is no difference between the soul and the body. In the *Mahābhārata* it is stated—

न भूतसंघसंस्थाने देवस्य परमात्मनः ।
यो वेति श्रौतिकं देहं कृष्णस्य परमात्मनः ॥
स सर्वसाद् वहिष्कार्यः श्रौतसार्तविधानतः ।
मुखं तस्यावलोक्यापि सचैलः खानमाचरेत् ॥

"The Divine Body is not formed of a conglomeration of Matter. He who knows and treats the Form of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a material form should be deprived of all duties enjoined by the Vedas and the Smṛtis. In other words, he has no right to perform works enjoined by the scriptures. His sight is so impure that one should bathe with one's clothes on after that inauspicious sight."

While offering praises to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā said in the *Bhāgavata*—

अस्यापि देव वपुषे मदनग्रहस्य
स्वेच्छामयस्य न तु भूतमयस्य कोऽपि ॥

"You have manifested this transcendental Form of Yours out of Your own will in order to confer Your grace on me. This form is never a creation of the five elements."

This clearly shows that everything pertaining to God is transcendental, His birth and works are all divine; but this Līlā in Vraja, the Līlā in the Gopīs' bower in Vraja, and in the bower also particularly the sports of sweet sentiment carried on with the Love-intoxicated Gopīs represent the finest divine state and the most secret of God's plays. This play is not revealed before ordinary men, it is an intimate form of Divine Līlā entrance to which is granted only to the Gopīs.

Apart from the Gopīs who are eternally established in Gopihood and stay with God eternally and inseparably in His eternal Supreme Abode, if the question is considered from the point of view of Gopīs who attained the Gopī-consciousness through their spiritual practices, their penances were so severe, their desire for union with God was so intense, their Love so deep and their attachment so true that there should be no wonder if God, the embodiment of Sweetness and Love, the wish-yielding tree to devotees, should accept their worship by enacting the sport of stealing their butter, or by stealing their garments remove the trappings which create distance between Him and them,

or by engaging Himself in Rāsa-dance give them the true taste of divine joy.

Besides the Gopīs, the embodiments of Consciousness, who eternally stay with God, there were many other Gopīs in Vraja who attained this state as the result of their supreme spiritual Sādhana for rendering personal service to God, so much desired by freed souls. Some of them were celestial girls in their previous birth, some were the Śrutis (Vedas), some were Ṛṣis devoted to penance, and some were other devotees. Their past stories are found related in the different Purāṇas. The Śrutis who are constantly engaged in describing God only through negative speech by saying 'Not this, Not this', and yet could not attain Him, hearing from the Gopīs how God enacted sweet, divine sports with them worship the Gopīs and getting transformed into Gopīs themselves attain Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their dearest object of Love. The names of the most important of these Śrutis are—Udgītā, Sugītā, Kalagītā, Kalakanthikā, and Vipañchi, etc.

The Ṛṣis who had felt charmed and enchanted at the sight of the divine Form of Bhagavān Śrī Rāma when He incarnated on earth and felt inclined to surrender their all to that transcendent Beauty, and pleased with whose solicitations the Lord granted them the boon of attaining Him by appearing on earth as Gopīs, came down to Vraja and incarnated as Gopīs. Besides, there were many other flocks of Gopīs classed as Gopīs of Mithilā, Gopīs of Kosala, Gopīs of Ayodhya, Pulinda Gopīs and the Gopīs of Swetadvipa, Vaikuṇṭha, etc., who earned the privilege of incarnating as

Gopīs through performance of severe austerities which pleased God to grant them the boon. The *Padma-Purāṇa*, Patala Khaṇḍa, contains the history of many Ṛṣis, who attained through extremely severe penances, and that also after many Kalpas,* the privileged form of Gopīs. Some of them are described below:—

1. There was a Ṛṣi Ugratapā by name, who was an Agnihotri and was resolutely devoted to his vows. His penances were extremely severe. He performed the Japa of the Mantra of fifteen syllables and meditated on young Śrī Kṛṣṇa of blue colour dancing madly at the climax of the Rāsa-dance. After one hundred Kalpas he re-appeared on earth as Sunandā, the daughter of a cowherd Sunanda by name.

2. There was another Muni, Satyatapā by name. He used to live by eating dry leaves, performed Japa of the Mantra of ten syllables and meditated on Śrī Kṛṣṇa dancing by holding both the hands of Śrī Rādhā. After ten Kalpas, he re-appeared as Subhadrā, the daughter of the cowherd named Subhadra.

3. There was a Ṛṣi Haridhāmā by name. Remaining without food he performed Japa of the Mantra of twenty syllables adding thereto the root-word *Kling* and meditated on Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa reclining on a bed of soft new leaves in the bower of Mādhavī (the

spring-creeper). After three Kalpas, he re-incarnated as Rangaveṇī in the house of the cowherd Sāranga.

4. There was a Ṛṣi, Jābālī by name, who had realized Brahma. Once passing through a huge, dense forest he came upon a large watering-place. Under a banyan tree on the western bank of the tank, he observed a young woman engaged in performing severe austerities. She was exceptionally beautiful. The aura round her head, like the disc of the moon, threw snow white rays. Her left hand rested on her waist on the left side and fingers of the right hand were held showing the Jñāna-posture. On Jābālī's asking her with great humility who she was, the female ascetic replied—

ब्रह्मविद्याहमतुला योगीदैर्या च मृग्यते ।
साहं हरिपदाम्भोजकम्यया सुचिरं तपः ॥
चराम्यसिन् वने धोरे ध्यायती पुरुषोत्तम् ।
ब्रह्मानन्देन पूर्णाहं तेनानन्देन तृप्तिः ।
तथापि शूल्यमात्मानं मन्ये कृष्णरत्िं विना ॥

"I am Brahmavidyā, whom the greatest of Yogīs constantly seek. For attaining the Lotus-feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I am for a long time performing penance in this dreadful forest meditating on that Best of Persons. I am full of the Bliss of Brahma and my intellect is saturated with that joy. But I have not yet attained Love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, therefore I feel myself as a void."

Jābālī, possessed of the knowledge of Brahma, fell at her feet and took initiation from her. Meditating on Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa strolling amidst rows of trees in the forest of Vraja, he performed extremely hard austerities standing on one foot. After nine Kalpas, he re-incarnated as Chitrāgandhā, a

* A Kalpa is a day of Brahma, consisting of 1000 Yugas, or 432 million human years, on the completion of which there is universal destruction.

Gopa girl in the family of the cowherd
Prachaṇḍa.

5. Suchiśravā and Suvarṇa, the two sons of Brahmarṣi Kuśadhwaja, possessed Knowledge of the Vedas. Standing on their heads, they performed Japa of the *Hring* Mantra and did severe penance meditating on Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa of ten years of age as beautiful as Cupid himself. After a Kalpa, they reincarnated in Vraja in the family of a cowherd whose name was Sudhīra.

The scriptures contain similar life-stories of previous birth of many other Gopīs all of which cannot be described here for want of space. What is the wonder or how can the question of moral propriety be raised, if in order to satisfy and give pleasure to Divine lovers, who attained the bodies and mind of Gopīs by such severe penance and performance of intense spiritual practices for Kalpas at a stretch, God sports with them just in the manner they desire Him to sport? At the time of the Rāsa-dance the Lord Himself said to the Gopīs—

न पारयेऽहं निरवधसंसुज्ञा
स्वसाधुकृत्य विपुषायुपि वः ।
या माभज्न् दुर्जरगेश्वलः
संबृद्ध्य तद वः प्रतियातु साधुना ॥

(*Bhāgavata X. xxxii. 22*)

"O Gopīs, you have given Me your sincere Love by cutting asunder the ties of bondage of this world as well as of the next. If I seek to return that Love separately to each of you by living for everyone for an infinite period, I shall fail to do so. I am indebted to you, and shall ever remain so. Out of your goodness regarding Me as free of

debt, please increase the more the burden of My debt. This is the best course."

It is quite natural that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord of all the worlds, who seeks to remain ever in debt to the Gopīs, should satisfy any desire of a Gopī even before it springs in her heart.

Dear reader, consider once the state of mind of these Gopīs whose entire being was given to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose thoughts were saturated with the Rasa of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All that they possessed—body, mind, wealth—belonged to dearest Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They lived in the world for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, continued to live in the family for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and carried on their household duties for the sake of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In their stainless, pure mind, which is difficult even for the greatest of Yogis to attain, there existed nothing but Śrī Kṛṣṇa which they could call their own. They used to feel happy for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sake, to make Śrī Kṛṣṇa happy, by rendering worship to Śrī Kṛṣṇa with Śrī Kṛṣṇa's things and finding Śrī Kṛṣṇa happy. From morning, when they rose from bed, till retirement at night, whatever work they did, they did for pleasing Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Their absorption in Śrī Kṛṣṇa was so great that when they slept, they merged their thoughts in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. During both the states of dream and deep sleep they saw and felt the sweet and auspicious sports of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When adding sour to milk at night for preparing curd, every Love-intoxicated Gopī, meditating on the enchanting Form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in her heart, used to desire that her curd might perfectly settle, so that she might get the best quality of butter by churning it

with a churning rod, and that butter she might keep on a hanging loop, high from the floor, but not too high for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's hands to reach, and Beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa with His playmates might come to her pantry, smiling and enjoying plays with His friends, steal her butter and freely distribute it among His friends and the monkeys and then dance in joy in her courtyard, and she hiding in a corner might see all these sports with her own eyes and make her life blessed; and then suddenly catching hold of Him, she might clasp Him to her bosom. The poet-saint Suradas says—

"O mother, I like to eat butter;
I have no taste for the sweets with
the flavour of fruits for which you
press Me.

A cowherd-maid, standing behind,
overhears these words of Śyāma
(Kṛṣṇa).

In her mind she says, when shall
I, remaining hidden,
See Him seated near the churning-
pot, eating butter in my own
cottage.

Suradas's Lord is a reader of
thoughts; He at once perceived the
desire of the cowherd-girl."

The Lord who knows every heart,
knew the mind of the Gopī, went to her
cottage and gave her pleasure by eating
her butter—

"Therefore, went Śyāma (Kṛṣṇa) to
the cowherd-maid's cottage."

The joy she derived from this was
so great that she could not contain it.
Again, Suradasji says—

"Swollen through excess of joy, the
maid began to move about,
Her friends asked her whether she
had gained any unclaimed
treasure.
The hair on her body stood on end,

her voice became choked, she could
utter no word.
Her friends said, 'What has hap-
pened to you, why do you not speak?
Our bodies may be different, but our
heart is one; we are all one and the
same.'
Says Suradas, the maid replied, 'O
I have seen Beauty incomparable.'

As she uttered this, her voice got
choked again, tears of Love began to
flow from her eyes. The condition of
all the Gopis was like this.

"In Vraja, the report spread in every
cottage,
Hari (God) stealing curd and butter,
eats the same with His friends, the
cowherd boys.
Hearing this the maids of Vraja felt
delighted; they desired He might
come to everyone's cottage;
So that they might catch Him eat-
ing butter, and encircling Him with
arms could press Him to their bosom.
Cherishing this desire in mind,
they meditated on this in their
heart.
Taking Suradas's Lord to their
cottages, they allowed Him to eat
butter.

* * * * *
In every household in Vraja the
talk spread.
The Darling of Nanda, taking friends
with Him, eats stolen butter.
One says, 'He just entered my
cottage running'.
Another says, 'finding me at the
door, He ran away in that direction'.
Some other says, 'how shall I see
Hari in my cottage?
I shall give Him the best quality of
butter as much as He can eat.'
Another says, 'if I detect Him, I
shall encircle Him with my arms'.
Yet another says, 'I shall bind Him
with cords, who can prevent me
from doing this?'
For meeting Suradas's Lord, the

Darling of Nanda, they pursue all these thoughts and pray to the Creator with joined palms.

Keeping up nights, they used to wait for the break of dawn. With mind fixed on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they would quickly churn the curd, and separating the butter keep it hanging on the loop. Their one care was that Beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa might not go back disappointed, therefore they would do this in preference to all other work and anxiously waiting for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's appearance would surrender their mind to this line of thought—'Why does not the Beloved come today? Why is He so late? Will He not sanctify the cottage of this slave of His? Will He not accept today this small offering of butter and make me happy by deriving joy from it? Could it be that He is detained by mother Yośodā? She has nine lakhs of cows. There is no lack of butter in her house. He visits my cottage out of sheer grace.' Engaged in these thoughts with tearful eyes, the Gopi would run to her cottage-door every now and then, and giving up modesty would cast her longing look towards the roads and alleys. She would put questions to her friends. The time taken by a wink would appear to her as long in duration as a Yuga. Appearing in their cottages, the Lord used to satisfy the desires of fortunate Gopis like these. Suradasji, again, says—

"First, the Lord stole butter—
Thus fulfilling the desire of the maids, He walked in the alleys of

Vraja,

The Lord turned over in mind, 'I shall go to every household in Vraja; Having appeared in Vraja for enjoyment's sake, I shall eat everyone's butter.'

Mother Yośodā knows Me to be her child alone, but I shall enjoy happiness with all cowherd-maids.' Says Suradas's Lord, Love is the cause of My appearance in Vraja."

The Lord appeared in Gokula in order to give pleasure to His devotees, the residents of Vraja. There was no paucity of butter in the house of the patriarch Nanda, he possessed lakhs upon lakhs of cows. There the Lord could eat and distribute as much as He liked. But He belonged not to Nanda alone, He belonged to all the people of Vraja and wanted to make everyone happy. In order to fulfil the desires of the Gopis, He used to visit their houses and commit thefts of butter. This was no theft in the real sense of the term but acceptance of worship by the Lord in another form. How can the Lord deny to accept the worship of His devotee?

Owing to ignorance of the true secret of this wonderful sport of theft of butter by the Lord, some people declare it to be objectionable, so far as propriety of conduct is concerned. They should, first of all, know the very definition of theft and realize whose things are stolen in this case and who committed the theft. When a thing possessed by another is appropriated without his consent, without his knowledge, with the intention of concealing the fact from the possessor, it is called a theft. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to steal butter from the Gopis' cottages with their consent, not without their knowledge, but with their cognizance, before the very eyes of the Gopis, and there was no question of concealing the fact from them. He used to fly from them, running before their eyes.

The second important point to be considered in this connection is—What is there in this world, or beyond it, which does not belong to God, and of the theft of which He may be guilty? All that the Gopis possessed was His, in fact, the whole world belongs to Him. Who is the other independent possessor, whose things may be stolen by Him? In this world, the real thieves are, indeed, those who regarding God's things as their own get attached to them and hence become worthy objects of punishment. Considered from all these points of view, it is clear that the theft of butter was no theft at all, it was a wonderful, fascinating sport of the Lord. From excess of Love, the Gopis con-

ferred on the Lord the pet name of 'thief' and, as a matter of fact, He was a thief, because He stole their heart.

Those who do not regard Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa as God Himself do not possess the qualification to analyse in the proper spirit, and pass judgment on, the sports of the Lord as described in the *Bhāgavata*. But from their point of view also no wrong can be detected in this sport. For Śrī Kṛṣṇa was at that time a child of about two years of age, and due to excess of fondness the Gopis desired to see Him enact these sweet sports. (*Kalyan*)

(To be continued)

The Way In

BY WANDERER

If He was got by the mere call,
Gold would have sold
For the price of glass.

With artless devotion,
One-pointed, complete,
Conceive Him first
In pots and stones;
And piercing Maya's enchanting veil
Through reason's light,
Call unto Him by day and night.

Krishna-Prem's selfless sense
Seize at the start;
Next, from earthly cares detach,
Flinging the beads of lust;
And then alone to thy heart
Shalt hold Him fast,
As thy Lover and thy Lord.

(Based on a Bengali song)

No Permanent Peace on the Physical Plane Until.

BY ARTHUR E. MASSEY

We talked of and advocated disarmament at the end of the war of 1914-18. I myself have a press cutting of a letter I sent to the newspapers declaring that another great war was inevitable unless arbitration was decided upon, but the nations of the earth were so fearful and suspicious of each other's good faith (not without reason) that all efforts ended in stalemate.

When we think of the endless antagonisms in the general scheme of the vibratory universes it is almost impossible to postulate a time when the world will be at peace, unless a *spiritual* revolution alters everything. If the material world is to persist, ceaseless opposition must continue in order to balance things, for if all worked perfectly smooth, vibration itself would gradually cease and become quiescent—ceasing to be.

If the white corpuscles in the blood of our bodies became pacifists and gave up their endless militant vigil to protect us from invasion by hostile forces, rushing to every threatened point to outmanoeuvre and annihilate the invaders, we should all soon cease to be. Only by their unceasing warfare against unseen enemies do we live, move and have our earthly being protected by the sacrifice of themselves. When some foreign matter penetrates our skin, to that spot rush the white corpuscles to combat the invaders. The same contest takes place with the bacilli of small-pox, diphtheria,

lockjaw, scarlet fever or malaria, the white corpuscles form and reform their decimated legions in an endeavour to overcome and oust the enemy.

How then can there be an abiding peace in such a vibratory world? It is simply impossible, we must seek it on a higher plane of being. The monks and devotees of all great religions realized this fact ages ago; and such communal orders as the Society of Believers, commonly known as the "Shakers" of America, of our own time, also realized it.

In a word, we must aim to get back to the Source—the origin of our being and of all manifestation. How then to do it? We must begin to penetrate the hidden fastnesses step by step. If we deny ourselves the power, we shall never arrive. The Supreme Self is the centre and Reality of our being—therefore, "all things are possible to him that believeth". We who aim at making the great experiment must first learn to put ourselves to sleep in the arms of ourselves—the great I AM, by laying down our consciousness, which most human beings refuse to do. It is not the individual who frees himself from consciousness, it is the great Unconscious which frees itself from the individual, and becomes aware of its Wholeness. Reabsorbed into the Primal Source the imprisoned self becomes the whole thing. It is there that language utterly fails because such sublimity is utterly indescribable. Even the mystic who

makes the attempt utterly fails, for he has to fall back upon negative terms in order to deny the Conscious which is the real barrier to realization.

In essence we are divine, but stress too much importance to our sadly limited consciousness, ever floundering in the maelstrom of phenomenal illusion. Man clings tenaciously to the personality, hence he lives in a world of illusion, and no affirmation of his divinity will bring freedom until he abandons the little 'I' or lower self.

When we once realize how puny this limited consciousness of ours is, we just yearn to shed it, if by so doing it can give place to something of greater value and of higher potency. When we have tasted this ineffable, indescribable and incomparable glory, dissatisfaction with the body of our humiliation will ever confront us, and although we have to go on with "the trivial round the common task", we shall always seek to renew this contact on every possible occasion. Thus shall we live "in the world, but not of it", fulfilling our task in the vibratory world, strengthened and made anew by the spirit. There are undoubtedly some who may object to the use of the word Unconscious, to such it may appear cryptic or even meaningless, let such define it as Superconscious, for such it really is. What we need to understand is the absolute divorce between limited consciousness and unlimited Superconsciousness. The former will always be dominated by antagonisms, no matter how strong our advocacy of "Peace and Good Will", for the militant element is rise from the lowest form of physical life to the

highest. Family feuds are as active as ever they were. The unfortunate individual is obsessed with an egotism that positively defies description as to its intensity and virulence. So deep is the poison seated in the system that no power whatsoever can eradicate it, until the individual is suddenly made to realize that he is *not* an individual, and when we have said that we have said all.

I am far from advocating a withdrawal or retirement from the world of vibrations, such an act would be the quintessence of selfishness. 'Give up thy life if thou wouldest live' is the *sine qua non* of real liberty. Whole-hearted service of God and man is the only justification for persistence on the physical plane, and to serve effectively we must make the supreme sacrifice of the ever-asserting and intruding little ego. Jesus meant this when He said: "sell all that thou hast and give to the poor" and "come, follow Me."

"The Peace that passeth all understanding" becomes the natural possession of the soul stripped of all worldly attachments. We cannot enter into 'the Holy of Holies' weighed down by the accretions and incrustations of worldly interests.

There can be no rest nor peace for those who seek to divide their affections between the seen and the unseen—the real and the evanescent. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

Our efforts for what we call 'world peace' will always fall short of their objective until the 'inner peace', which the world knows not, projects itself from the Divine Centre unto the ends of the

earth. The real danger of asserting "I am God" is the inflation of the little ego—the illusive perishable self which is anything but Godlike; self must therefore go before we can assert our divinity or render any tangible help to our fellows or the world at large. The personality must die and be buried, giving place to the Christ within—the true living and abiding Self. "Not I but *Christ* that liveth in me." As this glorious consummation takes place in our fleshly prison houses its potent influence will slowly but surely leaven the whole world until "Christ is All and in All".

The physical plane must be transmuted into the spiritual by individuals who have become selfless, who have long since abandoned the "I and Mine" policy of everyday life, who are crucified to the world, the flesh and self gratification, *living only to serve*. From our limited point of view the process will be a protracted one, but from the spiritual and larger view time does not count, sufficient for us to know that "when all things shall be subdued unto Him (the Christ), then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that *God may be all in all.*" Om ! Om ! Om !

Realization of God—I

BY L. KANSHI RAMA CHAWLA

The greatest and foremost object of human life is to know the Supreme Being, the Absolute, the All Bliss; to seek communion with Him and to illumine the Self with His effulgence. Many of us are unmindful of this chief aim of life. Those of us who possess a knowledge of this goal and strive for its achievement, do not often attain success. There are several causes of this failure. We have to examine them and think out ways for their removal.

No doubt there is no royal road to this destination. There are diverse paths to reach it. The same Truth, the same goal or the same point may be approached from different directions. A person will move towards the goal from the point or space which he may occupy for the time being. It is not possible for all to start from the same direction,

and the same point, because all do not stand at the same place and in the same direction from the goal. True, the objective or goal of all is the same, therefore, finally all will reach the same common destination. However inasmuch as they are placed in different directions from the goal, their ways of approach to it must therefore be necessarily different.

It is, however, imperative that the pilgrims of this journey must face the goal in their march. Those proceeding in the wrong direction cannot possibly reach it.

There, then, is the question of earnestness. The desire must be ardent, strong, genuine, and sincere, without which the goal cannot be reached.

Another obstacle, which hampers one's progress on this path is an attempt

to realize the Supreme Self merely with the help of knowledge and intellect. There is still another much more important factor, rather it is the most important one. It is not the sharpness of intelligence but faith that is required in the domain of divinity. Some illiterate people have reached the highest rung of the spiritual ladder, while many erudite scholars and theologians of repute could not go up even an inch.

Still another cause of failure is the adoption of incorrect means, for the realization of one's object. The selection of correct means is equally important for attainment of the object.

The subject is so difficult, complex and delicate that it can be dealt with only by a chosen few. How aptly has it been said that wonderful is the story, wonderful is the Hero, wonderful are the scenes to be described and consequently only a wonderful personality can explain it.

The writer is neither among the chosen few, nor the wonderful ones. But having an ardent desire for spiritual progress he has with considerable hesitation and relying solely on the Lord's grace and mercy, attempted to describe what he felt after sitting at the feet of holy and blessed souls and reading the scriptures. This attempt should therefore be taken as a sincere talk of a fellow seeker after Truth.

Before attempting to say something about the method of achieving God's realization, it seems necessary to discuss some preliminary points, e.g., where is God's abode, and can we meet Him? etc. These points cannot be fully dis-

cussed in this series of articles, but it would not be out of place to make some brief observations on them.

To start with, let us see where is that Beloved One with whom we desire to seek communion.

Where is God? Unless we know His place, how can we think of meeting Him? The Lord is Omnipresent. He is very close to us, rather He is seated within us. Then why can we not see Him? Because we do not possess that vision which is required to perceive Him. Material eyes can witness material things but the Lord is beyond matter, space and time. To perceive Him we need Divine vision. As soon as that faculty is acquired, His presence is felt in everything and in every being.

Beautiful indeed is that Vision, that is had independently of the physical senses. We must, therefore, know that there is no place where He is not—rather, there can be no place where He is not. All existence throbs with His presence. Every small atom exists owing to Him. Our own existence is due to Him. He pervades everywhere.

He is farthest away from us in the distant heavens, and he is nearest to us in the innermost recesses of our hearts. Whatever small portion of the universe is visible to us, and whatever large expanse is beyond our ken, both are alike the abode of the Unseen One.

As He is All-pervading, He is All-knowing. Nothing is concealed from Him. Not only our good deeds and thoughts, but our evil thoughts and deeds are also known to Him. It is no use trying to conceal any sin from Him.

There is no spot in the universe where we could hide our head from His clear and all-seeing eye. His ever vigilant looks are always keeping a watch on the whole world—even on the tiniest atom of the universe.

Thus we have seen that we have not to go to some far off place in the quest of our Beloved, our Lord.

The next point is—can we meet our Lord? He is said to have no form, no image, and is said to be Invisible, Unthinkable, Unknowable and Unfathomable. Then how is it possible even to know such a Being, much less to meet Him? It is true that He is exactly such as has been described. It has therefore been said already that He cannot be known or seen with the help of these physical senses. Says the Upaniṣad:—

"He is not perceived by the eyes nor through speech, nor by any other organs. Nor can He be realized by any austerities or any other such means. Only the mind purified by wisdom, in meditation finds Him, Who is without parts."

It is further said:

"God is not perceived by the eyes, yet we can see the manifestation of His spirit in the spirit of man. He is not heard by the organs of hearing, yet we are able to hear His commands. He is beyond all our senses, yet we can experience the truth and benevolence of His nature and quench our thirst with His immortal love."

Thus it is clear that although our senses are incapable of apprehending Him, yet the relation of our spirit with

Him is deep and intimate. After purifying the mind with wisdom through meditation we can perceive Him directly in our soul.

God's Nature God is love and the best and sweet means to meet Him is also therefore "LOVE". When we feel that He is watching over us in love and that His eyes of love are gazing into ours, then we feel inwardly that we are one with Him. As His nature is steeped in love, so is ours too.

If we look on Him with indifference, we cannot understand His love; but if we seek Him with the longing of pure love, then a new image of beauty will rise before our minds.

Like the tender love of a mother for her child the love of God blesses the whole world and the heart of every man. He sees in each one of us a separate individual to love and satisfies the hunger for love in each individual heart. If the world had contained but one individual, that one person would have been the sole possessor of His love. And so wonderful is His love that even among the countless souls of men, He regards each one as the complete owner of His invaluable treasure of love.

An earthly king cannot recognize, even by sight, all his subjects. But our Heavenly Father takes into His embrace of love every member of this boundless universe and makes each one His own.

Some one can ask, why is it necessary at all to know the unknowable? There is enough in the world to be known.

There is enough in the world to be observed and loved. It would be sheer waste of time to hanker for an object which is beyond the approach of our sense. Let us examine this point.

We came into this world in a state of utter ignorance. When we were born, we were unconscious of our existence and of our surroundings like the clods of earth, enveloped in darkness. But as we saw the light, love came in and caught us in its embrace. We were helpless at the time of our birth and could not do anything for ourselves or for others. What attraction was there in us at that time for anyone to care for us ?

Yet, long before we were born, God had sent love into the heart of the mother and that love shielded us against every danger. God gave us milk from our mother's breast and love from our mother's heart. We were incapable to ask for His love; it came of itself and possessed us, long before we knew Him or to love Him. He was our Father and our Mother and our all.

Now that we have come to know Him, He is the same lover and will remain eternally the same. He helped us when we were helpless. He loved us when we did not even know Him. Is it not now our duty to feel clearly the extent of God's love and to give, evermore, freely, our own love in return: not for the sake of God but for our own sake, not as a gift but as in the way of gratefulness and obligation ?

God is ready with His answer to our requests even before we have made them. He provides for us all the things we

*How kind is
the 'Lord'*

require, even before we consciously want them. The bounds of His love are immeasurably and incomparably greater than this narrow world. In this world the things from which we expect the greatest benefit often disappoint us. Even those who care most for us do sometimes cause us painful suffering. It is only by relying on the unchanging love of God that we can get over even the hardness and the cruelty of the world.

A world which abounds in weak and selfish men, each intent upon his own interest, seldom thinking of the needs of others, cannot secure us deliverance from sin and suffering. Enduring peace is to be found only in the full realization of God's presence and His love. There alone lies true peace. He has satisfied the longing for love in our hearts by the gift of His own love.

We may be subjected to countless sufferings in this world, but in His presence there is peace, unalloyed and pure. How often we have experienced that in the search of peace and pleasure we had to return disappointed again and again from those to whom we went for the satisfaction of our desires. Eventually we had to feel that no earthly friend could help us and we had therefore to look to that All-merciful, Eternal Companion.

He is our Supreme friend, the Lord who alone is worthy of our reverential regard and love, and who alone has the power to fulfil all our desires. It is therefore imperative to look for His grace and to seek communion with Him.

The next problem is, can everyone
Can everyone
 aspire to meet the Lord, or
 meet God ?
 is it only the select few who
 are given the privilege of
 peeping into His sanctuary ? The
 answer to this question is that all are
 equal in the eyes of our Heavenly
 Father and all have, therefore, the right
 to bask in the sunshine of His infinite
 and ineffable peace, love and bene-
 volence.

The question then arises, if all are
 equally entitled to seek the Lord's grace
 and love, why are not all successful in
 gaining it ? Let us tackle this point !

It is true that very few reach the
 topmost rung of the ladder, but such
 spiritual realization, such insight into
 truth does not come to everyone as if it
 were his birth-right. In the beginning
 the sages and saints, who were blessed
 with spiritual vision, were like anyone
 of us. It was only through spiritual
 striving that they succeeded in ascend-
 ing the highest peak of love and
 knowledge.

A noble and blessed soul once
 remarked—

"I was just one of you and had my
 full share of human frailties, but I
 strove hard till I was blessed with
 divine benediction. Now I have
 attained to a state which makes me
 wonder how such weakness could
 ever be mine. It is by following
 the light of the spirit, that I have
 become what I am. Seek and you
 shall also find."

The success of those blessed souls has
 been due to their sincere love for Truth.
 If we too wish to be like them, we should
 also steep our hearts in the milk of that

love; we must give our days and nights
 to the meditation of the glory of the
 Eternal One whose presence they realiz-
 ed intuitively.

It is not merely the desire to know
 Him that has been implanted in the
 heart of everyone of us, but with it He
 has instilled the power and capacity to
 know Him as well. It has been rightly
 said by a man of God, far advanced in
 the path of devotion, that the Divine
 spark of the knowledge of God has been
 instilled in the heart of all, irrespective
 of time, place and circumstances, and
 that there is no bar to anyone to know
 God or to be His exponent.

If we fail in this respect we our-
 selves are to blame. If rich and deli-
 cious dishes are served before a man and
 being quite healthy he is capable to
 enjoy them, yet if he does not taste and
 relish them, and suffers the pang of
 starvation in consequence, is anyone
 besides himself responsible for it ? Or
 take the case of a boy, who has all the
 facilities to prosecute his studies and
 earn distinction but wastes away his
 time in sport and gossip and is then
 declared "plucked". Whom else can he
 blame but himself ? Similar is the case
 with people who idle away their
 precious time. They will have to repent
 at the last moment. Every person
 should, therefore, strive to make his
 life successful and achieve the object for
 which it has been given.

Perhaps we all wish to do this but
 most of us wish to find God
fallacy as easily as one might pick
 up a shell on the seashore.
 We evince no patience or energy for
 this important task. We spend years

to master an ordinary art. We are prepared to toil and suffer in order to climb the highest of mountains or to plant our flag in the extremities of the world. On the contrary, we wish to realize God as easily as we get books from a book-seller, or medicines from a Chemist. We expect a priest to provide us with a passport to the Kingdom of Heaven at the cost of a few shillings or by devoting an hour a week. But as a matter of fact, it requires a good deal of labour to become religious in the real sense of the term. There is no patent medicine for this. The translation of one's ideas and intentions into realities is what is needed and this is not an easy task. There was nothing which Lord Buddha, the great prince of India, lacked. He had a kingdom, a palace, a wife, a child and every conceivable means of happiness. He denied himself all those, simply for the love of Truth. Similar was the case with Mahavir-Swami, Guru Nanak, Swami Dayananda and hundreds of others.

Sincerity of Desire

A sincere desire is needed even for the attainment of ordinary worldly objects, but it is all the more necessary in matters spiritual. Most of us consider that we have a strong desire, but actually that is not the case. A couple of stories will illustrate this.

A certain disciple went to his master and said to him:—

"Sir, I want to know Truth."

The master looked at the young man but did not speak. He only smiled. The young man visited the Guru time and again, and entreated him hard to

bless him with the key to Supreme Happiness. But the old man made no response. One day, when it was very hot, he asked the young man to accompany him to a river, and to take a plunge in it. The young man dived, and the old man followed suit. He held the young man down by force. When the young man had struggled for a while, he let him go. When the young man came up, the Guru asked him what he wanted most while he was under water. "A breath of air," the disciple answered.

Do you long for God as earnestly as that? If you do, you would surely get Him, otherwise you need not even dream of it. Howsoever hard your struggle with your books, intellect, or spiritual practices may be, until that degree of thirst is awakened, you are not better than an atheist, who is in some cases more sincere in his convictions than yourself.

There is another story of an old rich man. He was rolling in plenty. He was not lacking in anything. Even for the shortest distance, he commanded the use of a palanquin. Nor would he step out of his house without putting on rich robes. His only care was always to keep up his prestige. This was his normal behaviour. But one day his son was bitten by a snake and he was about to die. What did the old man do? He knew of a snake charmer in a far off place, who was a tanner by caste. Barefooted and half-naked, he ran to that place. There was no one with him.

Covered with perspiration, he went to the hut of that tanner, at a distance

of two miles. After much entreaty he was able to take him to his own house. During all this time the old man never thought of dignity or prestige, nor did it cross his mind as to what the people in the street might say about him; nor was he troubled as to whether his legs would carry him so far or not. He did not think of taking anyone with him, nor did he waste a glance at his feet, though they were sorely bruised and bleeding ! He wasted no time to requisition a conveyance.

We should also be out in quest of the Prince of Doctors, the healer of the world bites. We should attempt to attain our spiritual ideal without minding honour or insult, pleasure or pain. We need not care for incidental suffering and should never look up to others or allow any other digression. That should be our sole desire and then nothing can prevent us from entering the sacred mansions of the Lord.

What we need is action and not mere talk. What we require is genuine desire and not a mere profession of earnestness. If we strive faithfully, sincerely and constantly, our life will be sweetened by ineffable peace. We shall be blessed. On the other hand, if we read volume after volume, it will be of no avail, in case we fail to realize, in actual practice, the precepts contained in those books, however holy and sacred they may me.

It is not very difficult to obtain Divine vision if we pine for God's sight in the same way as a drowning person is impatient to come out of water. Of course our pining should be real and

not a mere make-belief. The Lord cannot help blessing a devotee who feels the same type of agony as one feels when he is on the point of losing one's life.

Such agony is experienced only when the devotee comes to recognize God as above everything else in the world, when he turns his back on all sense-enjoyments of this world and takes them as altogether worthless and has completely surrendered his life, property, power, honour, sense of decorum, worldly duties and even religious obligations, at the feet of his Beloved Lord.

A great sage once said that in this world only one in twenty millions may in reality be in quest of God. Being asked why, he said :—

"Suppose there is a thief in this room and somehow he gets to know that there is a mass of gold in the next room and only a very thin partition lies in between; what will be the condition of that thief ? Will he be able to sleep ? Will not his brain be actively thinking of some means of getting at the gold and will he be able to think of anything else ?"

Similarly if a man really wants God, he should be mad after Him. If a man sincerely believes that there is an immense mine of bliss, by reaching which he would get rid of all his miseries and sorrows, would not that man strive every nerve to reach it ? The sage concluded that as people are not making any serious efforts to get to that fountain of bliss, it is evident that they have no real desire to reach it.

When the devotee gets absorbed in thoughts of the Supreme Self, carin

not for his home or property, wife and children, this world or the next, joy and sorrow, honour and ignominy like one intoxicated; when he cannot bear even a moment's separation from Him and feels like a fish taken out of water; when the pangs of separation make him utterly restless, it is then alone that he can obtain the Beatific vision. But we do not generally experience that sort of agony for the Lord. That is why His vision is denied to us.

Have we ever in the whole span of our life striven to meet Him or pined for Him as much as we do for wealth and progeny, honour and fame? Almost all of us knock about from one place to

another and clamour for wealth and honour which are of such a trifling and transitory nature. Have we ever shed a tear out of real agony for the Lord? How can we, then, murmur on our inability to obtain His vision?

We have given ourselves up entirely to pleasures of the senses. Our craving for sense-enjoyments and indifference towards God show that we are not yet athirst for a vision of Him. Our soul does not hunger for Him. The moment we feel an acute thirst for God, we shall not be able to bear the sight of anything else but Him. Our mind would then withdraw from everything else and be absorbed in thoughts of Him.

(*To be continued*)

True Knowledge

BY SRI BHOLANATHJI MAHARAJ

Men are far and different from each other physically, but not spiritually, as waves on the surface of the ocean seem to us different from each other, but in reality they are fully connected at their background which is the ocean. In like manner every soul is related to each other internally but, through ignorance of this fact, they feel themselves something different and separated!

As all waves are one in the ocean so all souls find their unity in God. But in spite of being so closely related with each other, people do not feel the sense of nearness among themselves. They try to see their outward appearances which are surely the signs of difference among themselves, but, in doing so, they ignore the Substratum, the Back-

ground, the Reality which underlies all and is all-pervading and comprehensive. But this ignorance of man does not make any difference in the Reality. Reality is always the same; that could not be distorted or estranged by our ignorance. This ignorance affects us only and not the Reality. If people shut their eyes, it does not imply that the sun has vanished, or its light has diminished, while it is always the same and ever shining. The loss is to the eyes which are not fortunate enough to get the rays of the sun and see the things in their proper and real forms.

Similarly this ignorance blinds man and covers his intelligence and makes him feel those things which do not exist in reality and are only the outcome of

delusion. The truth is this that those who are ignorant of this fact do not get the real profit which could only be gained by its knowledge. On the contrary, those who know the relation of souls reap the full harvest of their knowledge and realize the unending peace which could only be got through knowledge of unity in all diversity.

'Unity in diversity' is the law of Nature. As men are different but the manhood amongst them is one and the same, so the creation with all its manifoldness, is diverse and various from every point of view, but the all-permeating thing is One and only One through all these names and forms and that is 'Is-ness'. Existence is only one in everything of the Universe. That existence is indivisible, undividable, undiminishing; neither expands nor contracts, never dies, is never born; is limited and unlimited at the same time—limited because of name and form, because it shines through all these names and forms and remains limited by them all; and is unlimited because it never finishes or ends anywhere. So everyone is *one* in Existence and diverse from each other in viewing the outward appearances.

He who knows that all diversity merges and converges into one, he, in spite of being in that diversity, is not moved or deluded by that mentally or spiritually. He remains in the world, acts like a wise man, performs his duties well; behaves with everyone according to his views and manners, is obedient to his superiors and treats with his inferiors kindly and in a loving manner; but at the same time knows internally that all

these things belong to the One Reality or Existence only.

Such a wise man weeps and laughs and struggles for so many things, loves and fights outwardly but is never misled mentally that there is anything real like 'two'. This sort of knowledge keeps the man mentally calm and serene at all times in spite of having all sorts of occupations and pre-occupations. I praise the courage of that man who, below the blue sky, is never entangled mentally in the meshes of attachment though outwardly living in the same world.

This Existence, Is-ness is the reflection of God Who is the Real Is-ness or Existence because He is Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Bliss, Absolute Existence. His reflection is caught in Time and Space or in the Creation. But in delusion we attribute the Existence to the appearances which, in fact, is the quality of God. God is Real and that is why He is SAT or the only Existing-Faculty. All else is non-existent. If we say that there is something else which is independent of God, this will imply that there are two real existences which, in their turn, would bring us to the conclusion that both are limited. Limitation implies composition which must disperse one day into decomposition and both will disappear leaving void behind them, those component parts or atoms will create once more that existence which will approve the theory of atoms floating in space which, in their turn, must merge into one force which will be one and indivisible. So every atom owes its existence to the Real Existence of God and there we all are one and related to each other.

O God, Thou art unveiled to such a degree that Thou shinest everywhere and, in spite of this unveiled position, Thou art so thickly veiled that none has the power to see Thee. When one tries to see God, He hides Himself under the veil of appearances; but when man is effortless and is above the notion of seeing or knowing Him, He is automatically revealed.

**Thy Glory is in every sphere,
And all things whisper 'God is here'.**

Reason cannot know Him because Reason only grasps the limited and not the unlimited; and when it tries to grasp Him or understand Him, the creation of limitation follows which serves the purpose of a veil to hide the Reality instead of revealing Him.

He is only known through His own Knowledge or Intuition as the sun is seen by its own light only and is knowable by its own light alone. As the sun is seen by its own light by the eyes and not by the ears, similarly God is seen or realized through the heart by the Grace of God alone. As Lord Christ has said:

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God".

Real purity of heart cannot be gained by man from books or pilgrimages or from other meritorious acts, it is only obtainable by the Grace of God. When one throws away all sorts of impure desires and loves God more and more and remembers Him all the time and asks Him to unveil Himself to us by His Grace only, then one feels that his heart is getting pure every day. Humility, remembrance of God, surrender of one's

will to God, desirelessness and constant prayers, eradication of ego and blind faith in God cleanse the heart fully. But all these again are the outcome of the shower of God's blessings. So there comes a day when man feels the purity of heart and, through that, comprehends the Blissful One. This is the only thing to be realized by man first and the world will follow. The span of life is so short and we have to tread a long, long journey, so we should be wise enough to have His Realization first.

"But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

To sum up: The aim of human life is God-Realization and that is only gained through the purity of heart. His remembrance in true sense purifies the heart and the purified heart brings Him nearer to us !

Some atheists deny the existence of God which means they deny the existence of Existence Itself which is ridiculous because the existence of their denial implies also 'existence'. Hence to deny the existence of God means to deny the existence of denial which results in assertion of the existence of God and does not prove its denial.

What is before us ?

God in the garb of Universe, for God is Existence Absolute and the Universe without existence would amount to nothing. Universe minus Existence is equal to zero. So all that we see, touch or hear is God and God alone; the Universe with all its appearances is only an imagined veil which conceals and reveals the Face of God at the same time.

To exemplify this, there is a ring in my hand made of gold. I ask you what is this in my hand and you say it is a ring and a ring alone. I again enquire what you see in my hand before your eyes. The given answer is simply this 'nothing but a ring'. What do you touch, smell or taste? 'Ring'. But on my melting it in fire you say 'now it is gold and only gold and not a ring anymore'. Then my question is 'if it is gold and nothing but gold then where is the ring which you have been looking to and touching so far'? Your response will be 'Oh that is gone now'. Now I ask was that ring real or unreal? If you say it was real you contradict yourself because *reality* can never be destroyed or burnt or melted away. And if you say it was unreal because it is nowhere now, then my question is 'if it was unreal then how could you see the unreal because unreality can never be seen, touched or tasted'? Then you will have to admit that the thing seen by you was a substantial thing not merely a projection of thought or unreality. Had there been nothing we could not have seen anything there. But there was *something* which was seen and touched and not *nothing* that responded to your senses. Were it nothing, you could have never sensed anything there. How was that *nothing* which was seen by you, touched by you? How was that nothing which pressed its weight in your fingers? How was that 'nothing' which sparkled before your eyes? Really, that was gold and gold alone which was the only *reality* of the ring. Prior to the formation of ring it was gold, after the ring melted away there appeared to us nothing but gold again. May I ask you again what

it was that appeared to your eyes in the form of a ring? Was that ring or gold? You may say 'both' but, then, my question is whether both were real or only one of them? You must say that gold was real and the ring was simply an imagination in gold. Ring had neither weight nor real existence of its own independent of gold. Had it been real it would not have been destroyed. Ring was such an illusion in gold which was never separate from gold. Then it naturally follows that it was gold and gold alone which was the real entity of the ring and again it was gold which was acting upon our senses though, deluded by its form, we felt for a long time that it was the ring which was the focus of our eyes and a real one.

Similarly, it is God and God alone Who is being seen or sensed by us, Who is always before us in the form of the universe; but by mistake we say it is the universe which is perceived by us with its varieties and diversities. But if you take away the existence of God, what will remain there? A universe without existence which is impossible to stand.

Secondly, God is that Who creates the universe as gold creates the ring. But gold is a part of dead-matter, hence it is not capable of creating anything but needs a goldsmith to give it the form of a ring or the form of some other ornament. God is not an inanimate One, He is a living Being. He has the Power, Śakti or Māyā to mould the universe from His Own Will which is omnipotent and all-knowing. He needs no other matter to create the world for that will put limits on Him and His Śakti which He cannot bear.

He is neither dependent nor inter-dependent. He is Master of His Own Will and of the entire universe. He needs not the help of others, He is not used to that because He is One without a second.

He is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. He is *in* the universe and yet out of it. He is the Seer and the Seen, the Knower and the Knowable, He is the Redeemer and the Redeemed. So, in the highest sense, God is All in All, and in another sense, He is the Creator of the universe from His Own Will and the giver of emancipation to the bound souls.

Some philosophers ask why did He create the universe? Was He bound to that? If so, it was impossible for Him to create the world; and if He was free, then why did He create it at all? But who are you to put this question before One Who is above reason? The existence of the creation shows that there is some Creator otherwise to admit the existence of the created-world without its Creator would amount to this that a pot has been made without a potter! So whether 'He was bound or free' implies automatically that He was bound to His Own Free Will and not to yours or mine and, because He was free to create, so He created the world. Had He not been free to do so then how could He have created it? If He did not bind Himself to His Own Thought or Will then, in that sense also, He could not have created such a wonderful world. So He was free and was bound to none except Himself. Being Omnipotent, He could do what He wished.

He is also omnipresent, otherwise He would have been limited. So it implies that He is everywhere and that is why He is easily graspable and tangible to those who wish to see Him or realize Him. Had He not been near to you where would you have run to see Him? So He is *with* you, *in* you, around you, near you. And in spite of all this He is far from you. Were He not far from you, how would He have been near to others? So it is He alone Who is appearing before you in the form of the universe. The deluded reason does not comprehend Him as He is.

If He is everything then what are we?

We are only the consciousness that *we are* and this consciousness is only a part of that all-pervading One. Now we feel we are bound to desires and later on, by the Grace of God, we feel that we are going to be freed from the shackles of desires and, even after that, we feel that we are the pure consciousness of Divine-Intoxication and Knowledge which removes all worries.

Our identity is not something independent of Him. Our I-ness begins from the very place where His His-ness ends and wherefrom we lose sight of God and ignore entirely His all-pervading existence. You say 'Thou' to everything that comes in contact with you. So everything before you is 'Thou' and when you reflect on yourself, you bring your I-ness also in the form of 'Thou' in objective form and here starts the real wisdom. When everything comes in the realm of 'Thou' the 'I' disappears and what remains is the only pure

consciousness which is totally free from the conceptions of I, He or Thou, etc.

So to merge one's thought in the fact that 'without Him everything is non-existent' is the essence of real knowledge which deals with unity in diversity. It is He alone Who appears before you in the form of the universe. But this idea won't take away the power of action from you, but, on the contrary, you will find a momentum in you which will induce you to work harder and faster than before. This realization will make a saint of you and the Bliss will surge on every side of you.

But so long as you retain your own will, your desires, your ego, you have no right to look on yourself as part and parcel of that Magnanimous One. You are a bound soul entangled in the meshes of delusions and temptations. You have no right to think of you as a 'divine spark'. But when you lose all desires and have control of your baser self and victory over your evil propensities, then and then alone you have the right to feel and realize yourself as the spark of the Blissful One, the part of the Whole, or the divine being of the Divine One.

If anyone wishes to see Him as He is in His finest Nature, it is essential for him to make himself fine after abandoning his ego and desires.

God is neither far nor near you. He is *in you* as 'you'. But until you purify your heart and cleanse out all sorts of dust of temptations, you will never see Him.

You need a mirror to see your face. What you see in the looking glass is not

there but in your face which is really your own reflection but which is only seen through a purified and clean mirror. In like manner, we have to see Him in our pure hearts.

Now, we are individual; we have egos, desires, etc. So we are limited and helpless. Hence we need a God without Whom we cannot move or run towards the Reality. So we ought to pray to God to help us in our fallible plight and take us over to the Blissful Realization which is hard for us to achieve but very easy for Him to bestow upon us. So we, as drops, pray to the ocean to merge us in Him and make us free from all fear of death and birth, sorrow and suffering. None else will deliver us from the bondage of ignorance. We are fallen in the quagmire of temptations. Who will save us except Thou ? So come soon, make haste, do not stop, catch hold of us and lead us wheresoever Thou wilt. Let our wishes be crushed, our wills be surrendered to Thee, and let not even a word of complaint come out of our lips. Let Thy Will be sweet to us, Thy Realization the only source of happiness, Thy remembrance the nectar of our lives and Thy Revelation the key to us which unlocks the door of Heaven and showers upon us the everlasting Bliss. Let no man go empty-handed from Thy door, let none go half-hearted from Thy Benevolent Nature. Come, fill the hearts of the depressed ones, console the down-trodden, give peace to the unrestful. Our lives are a huge conflagration to us without Thee. So come to us, fill our hearts with Thy Love and let peace flow on every side of the world.

We have waited long enough for you. Now we are dying because of Your separation; so come, come, come. The time is passing fast and we need Thee very badly. Thy Presence amongst us will be a source of life, love, peace

and happiness and we will need no other Heaven. We will be in Heaven in Thy presence. Pray do not forsake us. We are in agony; so God, help us all is the heartfelt prayer of Thy devotees and lovers.

Gospel of Sri Krishna or The Gita as Song of Life

BY HARGOVIND

INTRODUCTORY

The unique position occupied by the *Bhagavadgītā* in the philosophical literature of the world is mostly due to its catholicity and its all-embracing, broad principles of ancient morality and everlasting religion, which held good at all times and among all civilized races and countries that have unanimously accepted it as an inspired work of sublime thought and practical teachings of universal application. Though this divine dialogue between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra forms but a brief episode of 700 Ślokas compiled and catalogued in eighteen chapters of the whole of the epic of *Mahābhārata* it alone has been rendered and commented upon in almost all the languages of the civilized world and most of the philosophies, both ancient and modern, directly or indirectly owe their origin to the theories and principles put forth and proclaimed for the good of man by the divine author of the *Bhagavadgītā*. From philosophical and literary standpoints the purport of the *Bhagavadgītā* has been summed up and clarified in a famous Śloka by one of its foremost commentators who says that the *Gītā*

is the milk of the cow which allegorically represents all the "Upniṣads" (Vedic philosophy) milched by the cow-boy Śri Kṛṣṇa for the use of Arjuna (and incidentally for all seekers after truth) who represent the calf.

A word of caution is here necessary for the ordinary reader. Efforts have been made by most of its learned commentators to indicate the *Gītā* as a book of Karmayoga (selfless actions) Jñāna (spiritual knowledge) or Bhakti (devotion) or as a treatise on Vedānta, Yoga, Sāṅkhya, or similar other idealistic philosophies; some have gone so far as to attach self-asserted meanings to its passages and quote them for reference in support of dogmatic teachings, sectarian techniques, and mechanical devices which they profess as sure means for the fulfilment of desires and attainment of spiritual illumination. Their efforts though honest and bona fide according to the trend or traditions of the faith they hold dear, are in the strict sense misleading and of necessity must limit, rather lower, the scope and value of the *Bhagavadgītā* by passing it as a scripture of sectarian religion or technique rather than as one of universal philosophy and practical living.

which in fact is its unique feature and peculiarity among most of the literary and philosophical compositions of the world. The *Gītā* has no water-tight compartments or artificial ascents from one thought or the other. It treats of "spiritual life as a whole dealing with various aspects of spiritual thoughts and cultures, at the same time maintaining complete harmony between them". While studying the scripture the student should therefore try to grasp the real and practical meaning of its sublime teachings applicable to actual life as if they were directed to him personally and not to Arjuna alone on the battle-field. Being in the nature of a dialogue between a keen disciple and his omniscient Master it is but natural that there should be parables and repetitions of argument on the same subject here and there. It is with a view to avoid confusion which such repetitions are liable to cause in lay minds that I have made the humble attempt to write this brief survey by way of an introduction and summary of the *Gītā* as interpreted by various commentators of repute most of whom had had opportunities of bringing these principles and teachings to test in their daily life.

CHAPTER I

This chapter deals with Viśādayoga (way of suffering) which has a philosophical significance and is more of the nature of a philosophical discourse than a mere historical narrative. As an introduction to the *Gītā* it illustrates the true value of suffering and supplication as means to salvation and indicates that God Almighty is sure to come to the aid of

humanity when the suppliant feels his utter helplessness, when his arguments fail and all the false cloaks of egotism and personal vanities disappear in the face of overwhelming grief and insurmountable difficulties and his soul appears in all nakedness before his Lord surrendering unconditionally to His Will. No better example of this helpless surrender could be cited than when Arjuna, devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, realizing his failings and shortcomings and finally cutting short his arguments humbly and unreservedly fell at the feet of his Divine Master, imploring like a child "Lord, I am helpless and absolutely deluded as to the right course of my action. Pray show me the way and tell me what would be best for me to do. I surrender myself to Thy will as Thy own humble pupil" (*Gītā* II. 7). The almighty and merciful Master then after explaining all the pros and cons of this illusory world of actions and misunderstandings, comforts Arjuna with His loving words and divine message, which holds good for all times "Leave all thy faiths and surrender to Me alone. I will save thee from all evils and difficulties. Grieve not." (*Gītā* XVIII. 66). This simple and loving message of truth comforted Arjuna's agitated mind as it will comfort the mind of the whole of right-minded humanity, and he fought his much-dreaded battle and won it as an instrument in the hands of his Divine Master without incurring any sin for his action. The one great test of self-surrender (which is only another name for worship, supplication or love of God) is perfect resignation in all undertakings, and absolute absence of hate, worry, fear,

vanity, and worldly desires. Worship, according to the *Gītā*, is no worship if it is attended with fear, vanity, personal motive or desire. Surrender is no surrender if there is still in the mind a desire or personal ambition. "Bow with offerings, and not with wants", so says the poet of India.

Nothing brings the human soul nearer to God (through self-abnegation) than silent suffering of a truly devout and innocent mind, provided it is borne in a spirit of perfect resignation and by way of supplication and sacrifice to the omnipresent and omniscient Lord. Indian literature is full of true stories from real life of many a devotee whose silent sufferings and invocations brought a ready response and a prompt solution of their difficulties as though by miracle. Sweet are, indeed, the uses of adversity; and all human miseries, worries, failures and humiliations are blessings in disguise, if rightly understood, and calmly suffered for self-purification and supplication as means to invoke divine mercy and attain true knowledge, forbearance, experience, wisdom and dispassion.

Kuntī, mother of the Pāṇḍavas, when asked by Lord Kṛṣṇa for a parting boon, sought the gift of suffering, since it had the power of attracting her divine Master and keeping her constantly at his lotus feet. Arjuna had three opportunities of listening to his Divine Master's learned discourses but did not realize their true significance except when suffering defeat at the hands of the Bhils. Sudāma, the humble but personal friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa, when endowed with enormous riches by the

latter, preferred a life of self-imposed poverty and seclusion, realizing that God and riches ever remain contradictory and antipathetic to each other. The same instinct of approaching God through suffering was present in the heroes of Puranic stories, and is even today present in those ascetics, sovereigns, forest dwellers (*Vānaprasthis*) and others, who delight in self-imposed poverty and suffering as their ideal of life.

Even in purely worldly matters the well-known saying—no pain, no gain—shows that the power and value of pain in achieving success and prosperity is fully recognized in those quarters as well. It is the easy-going and comfort-loving members of a society who as a rule bring about its fall and ultimate degeneration while its true saviours always consist of its warrior classes, its sacrificing patriots and its toiling millions, who for all practical purposes live and die for others.

Lord Jesus Christ blessed the suffering humanity and promised them spiritual comfort and His Cross is a symbol of suffering as the surest road to bliss and immortality. Even in the *Gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa gives full assurance of Divine love to those who remember God in their need and suffering and ranks them next to Jñānis or self-realized persons. His lofty discourse in the *Gītā* points chiefly to His effort to comfort and console Arjuna in his ill-founded "grief over the impending death of his relatives in a righteous war".

Another important point which is brought out in this chapter is the importance of human character,

courage and balance of mind in solving all vital problems of humanity. "Drones must die and the weaklings should go to the wall, only the fittest survive." All morbid thoughts of fear, worry and other inferiority complexes are to be struck off from the realm of human activities—including worship—if one has to raise oneself up to the highest peak of success and victory over evil forces of life, and identify himself with God and His defined attributes. In practical language the man who is established in truth (reality), courage (Samata or balanced and steady mind) and love (looking to bright side of things) is one who may be said to be in union with God.

The first lesson taught to Arjuna by Lord Kṛṣṇa and which the *Gītā* imparts to everybody before it enters into the deeper questions of human life, is "to be practical", a man of action than of words, to muster courage and act—leaving success and failure in the hands of the Great Unknown, Who knows all.

The realization and worship through meditation of One Real Good and Supreme Unity (*Puruṣottama*) behind all diversity was the chief popular religion prevalent in India and in many other lands in the *Upaniṣadic* period when spiritual elevation and moral strength of the people were at their zenith. Gradually with the change of times weakness of the flesh made its appearance in man and corrupted religion. Personal wants and selfish motives came to the front and the sacred idea of the unity of one universal God changed into the conception of duality, rather

plurality, in nature, giving rise to various rituals, mechanical devices, and dogmatic theories for the fulfilment of human desires which even the best effort of man could not always ensure. The teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā* points apparently to the slow and steady revival of that religion of Unity and universal Good, to divest humanity of all morbid ideas of fear, evil, superstition and uncertainty which the conception of duality in nature so deeply impressed on the popular mind. This spiritual degeneration in India and elsewhere apparently coincides with the conflict of thought between the idealistic (Adwaita) and dualistic (Dwāita) theories about God-head (commonly known as Vedantic and Bhakti paths or Sāṅkyā and Yoga schools of philosophy) in the epic period which too the *Bhagavadgītā* seriously attempted to reconcile (vide Chapter II) although the difference between the followers of these two paths is still as wide as ever.

True worship according to the *Bhagavadgītā* is selfless work and the development through it of a superior attitude of the human mind in identifying it with the soul as God. It should therefore lend strength, assurance and self-confidence in true worshippers instead of timidity, despair and disappointment and their "tears" should be more of joy of communion or pangs of separation from their Lord than of fears, worries and anxieties about worldly matters. This superior attitude is formed by personal character, right spiritual knowledge (*Jñāna*), faith, Love, and devotion with complete absence of hate and feelings of personal

vanities and Abhyāsa or practice and habit of straight thinking and right unselfish actions in which personal considerations or fruits, as opposed to genuine and generous dictates of duty, play little part. In short, the teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā* are, as the deified character of the dialogue would show, for the most part directed towards the strength, purity, and elevation of human mind and character leading humanity to divinity and divinity to God. Mechanical practices which do not touch the heart, nor change its character or which implant superficial faith and superstitions in human character in place of the realities of life do not come within the purview of the teachings of the philosophy of the *Bhagavadgītā*.

Another great shortcoming which the *Gītā* deprecates as a bar to human progress is insincerity or hypocrisy and immoderation in thought and actions. In short, it brings home to its reader the truth of the saying that "example teaches better than precepts" and makes him the embodiment of Truth in every respect.

The doctrines expounded in the *Gītā* are perfectly tolerant and unsophisticated. Generally speaking the policy and programme of the *Gītā* are non-controversial and constructive; it has no quarrels with its adversaries whose views are as a matter of course respected and rather accepted for the sake of arguments, but it places before them its own point of view and conclusions in the most logical and simple way. Read for instance verses 26, 42 to 46 of chapter II, verses 16 to 24 of chapter VII, verses 23 to 26 of chapter VIII, verses 20 to 26

of chapter IX, verses 1 to 7 of chapter XII, 1 to 6 of chapter XVII and 2 to 6 and 71 of chapter XVIII—in all of which fullest latitude is given to the opinion of those who hold different views on the immortality of soul, monistic worship or worship of God through name and form, provided of course that the truth about one intelligent unity underlying the universe and the method of approaching Him or to that state through character is not lost sight of. The fact that Śākara Bhakti (worship of God through manifestations and forms) is advocated and rather glorified in chapter XII as the more practical and popular system of worship among the common folk distinctly shows that Lord Kṛṣṇa has no disputes with those who chose their individual ways and means to achieve the end.

I may here add as my own personal conviction and belief that most of the institutions of dual worship and sentimental Bhakti or devotion which are prevalent to a great extent in India and perhaps the world over are to all intents and purposes the outcome of weak faith in the reality of God, lack of spiritual knowledge and selfish desires, and have no common affinity with the character cum devotional system expounded in the *Bhagavadgītā* (Chapter XII), the most characteristic features of which are unity of ideal, universality of purpose and sublimity of character. Man is naturally the creator of his thoughts and the correct value of all devotion or worship, like education, is the development of human thought to those virtues and ideals which are by common acceptance held to be the ultimate goal of human spiritual progress. Any

system which falls short of this test and which leads the mind astray from the right path requires correction and must be discarded. As I have stated above the wholesome and healthy effect and influence of "Sākāra Bhakti" (formal devotion through name and form) on human thought and character is fully recognized in the *Bhagavadgītā* but it is the individual attitude of the devotee's mind in relation to his deity and his personal understanding and character as a true and inseparable companion of God that makes all the difference. Those who sink to the lower depths of personal motives and narrow-minded superstitions go further deep into the abyss of ignorance and degradation while those faithful devotees who merge their personality in the infinite Love and Beauty of His form and rise to the height of sublimity in the light of divine qualities attributed to God, do like Prahlāda, Dhruva, Mirabai and so many others ascend to Reality from where there is no return or retrogression. From this it may not of course be concluded that it is not possible to conceive of God except in abstract form or that looking to Him for help and praying in difficulties and afflictions as to a necessary adjunct and corollary to human efforts is wrong and unnatural. The *Gītā* however reckons such self-interested devotees as much inferior to Jñānis or those self-realized devotees who have the child's implicit faith in God and are under all circumstances self-satisfied and resigned to His will. Prayers accompanied by rightful actions and offered inwardly and dispassionately to the One Supreme Power within, by the surrender of heart and soul to His

will seldom fail to prove efficacious. On the other hand, to substitute effort and duty exclusively by interested prayers and supplications for favours and assistance, by a man born for actions, though by itself a pious pastime, shows complete ignorance of God's ways and natural laws and is from the *Gītā*'s point of view an idle superficiality and superstitious idolatry liable to lead ordinary minds astray. The divine author of *Bhagavadgītā* promises full measure of support and success to those who help themselves and trust in God, but for them God should be the living ideal of their life and a concrete life-force behind all existence as the origin and end of all. It is, in fact, the wrong systems of dualistic worship and the idler's self-interested way of abject beggary, superstitious bigotry, and sycophantic flattery commonly known as prayer that is mostly responsible for the unenviable position and spiritual degeneration of most of the so-called formal sects of devotees who to all intents and purposes claim to be the successors of those self-realized ancient Rsis whose spoken words wrought miracles. There is, however, no room for despair as the *Gītā* promises full hope of redemption to all right-minded sinners who like Rsi Vālmiki and Bhaktas Suradas and Tulasidas raise themselves above the narrow ruts of personal prejudices and superstitious traditions and are constantly in touch with God as Reality in some form or other under the guidance and grace of the Guru and by constant association (Satsang) with mystics and saints. The *Gītā* has no quarrel with those who practise idolatry and reverently offer

fruits and flowers to the idol as an image of God incarnate provided they treat it as worship and do not take the means for the end. The perfectly straight and sensible way to emancipation is the *Gītā* way of rising through right knowledge and right action which automatically lends divine colour to human nature and life here and hereafter. In order to ascertain that particular method one should make it a habit of studying the *Gītā* as a whole, regularly and dispassionately and should dive deep into its esoteric meanings and the spirit underlying them, leaving aside personal vanities and prejudices and looking forward to the development of that particular state of mind which is depicted in the *Bhagavadgītā* as the peculiar characteristic of those who live, act and die for God and God alone in their self. I am a Sanatanist and have the greatest reverence and regard for all Sanatanist rites and practices, but left to myself I prefer confining my worship to the secret chamber of my heart with perfect Beauty as my idol and divine Love as its name. It is this idol of worship which the R̄sis of old symbolically depicted and personified in the sacred image of Lord Kṛṣṇa standing on the lotus of human heart, in all the majestic colours and glories of universe (peacock shades of His Māyā) and with His beloved flute constantly on His lips singing out love and calling on all high and low to forget their differences and unite in love as one soul.

Let us now look to the ethical side of this picture. Human instinct and understanding are seldom more widely misunderstood and more grossly misinter-

preted than when they deal with the three divine qualities of Universality, (equality or Samatā) Love and Beauty, the former having practically merged into the ideas of individuality in this age while the other two are invariably associated with the carnal desires of lust and the objects of lust; but a true and faithful devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa who, with one heart, worships him as an incarnation and idol of Universal Form, Love and Beauty (Trilokināth, Madan Mohan and Śyāma Sunder), must of necessity consider these qualities (as well as all others such as charity, justice, mercy, etc.) as deified and worshipable and must indeed incur no sin about them. These conceptions of the Deity formed by pure, universal and intuitive minds who composed the ancient soul-stirring love-lores and mystic allegories (such as Mahārāsa, Gopī-prem and several other well-known stories of the mythologies of the world) have under the present-day artificial and complicated life become paradoxical and quite a problem to be interpreted in their true sense and meaning.

Perhaps the worst mistake of man which makes him lose his entity in the vicious circle of sin, destiny, births and deaths, etc., is his wrong conception of himself and his responsibilities in the world, particularly with regard to his relations with God. A devotee of character, who sincerely looks to all sentiments and activities as emanations from one god, himself being only his instrument for the performance thereof, can incur no sins and is to all intents and purposes one with God in all his undertakings and legitimate

aspirations. On the contrary, the so-called devotee who exercises no control over his passions and desires derives but little benefit from his exertions though he may spend all his life in formal worship. Let each devotee constantly and regularly test his moral efficiency and spiritual advancement by self-examination and daily tests of his character on these lines and it will make his ascent much easier and practical than those who try to climb by haphazard means.

Hitherto I have referred to devotees who believe in the *Gītā* as their principal guide and work their way through character. Looking now to the other side of the picture of sentimental Bhakti or devotion as commonly practised in the world the antagonism and animosities between most of the followers of the various cults and institutions, on the simple issue of faith, conclusively prove the incompetence and futility of mechanical and characterless religions in dealing with the higher aspect of human morality and social co-ordination. It appears most probable that those who work with individual faith only, as their ideal soon fall into the pitfalls of personal opinions and prejudices from where there is no escape. Intoxicated with their victory over their adversaries in their fiery battle of words and content with the routine of their religious performances, these so-called devotees forget and ignore all other duties and social responsibilities and their circle of Love and duty becomes narrower and narrower everyday till it overruns all social and ethical barriers and centres

in self and self-gratification as the only goal of their life on earth.

CHAPTER II

Immortality and the changeless character of the embodied soul ("Self" as supreme) as distinguished from the transient and ever-changing nature of His material bodies^a; and slippery conduct of the senses with regard to their objects^b (causing feelings of pain, pleasure, heat, cold, etc.) is the subject matter of Sāṅkhyā¹ or spiritual philosophy of life in the *Bhagavadgītā*. The realization and analysis of this position and philosophy in life, at the same time leading a Dharmic life² of equanimity, endurance and indifference to objects of senses, is the remedy

(a) It is the habit of constantly thinking of the unrealities of life (objects of senses and fancies of mind) as opposed to the Real Self that attracts man to the unreal, causing desire, disappointment, wrath, egotism, indiscrimination and his fall.

(*Gita* II 65-66).

(b) It is an inevitable law of nature that refinement in the living and language of the people which invariably is the chief cause of extravagance, luxury, selfishness, hypocrisy and false propaganda among them mark the limit and downfall of their civilization and progress ("A Plea for Simple Living and High Thinking").

1. Non-dualistic and abstract philosophy of spiritual knowledge and self-realization through love and identification of soul with God.

2. Conformity with natural laws of life and conduct as given in "Sastras" or sacred codes of morality.

suggested under this school for the solution of the riddles and complexities of this life of apparent miseries and misunderstandings, and for guiding seekers to immortality and communion with the Supreme Reality—God.

The second subsidiary and rather practical method for attaining the same state is the Yoga³ way (mental development through selfless actions and steadfast will⁴ of leading an equanimous⁵ disciplined⁶ and independent⁷ life of purity⁸, self-control⁹, perfect calm¹⁰, contentment (under all

3. Dualistic or practical philosophy of right conduct and mental development through steadfast will and devotion to God.

4. Concentrated and single-aimed action of human will and intelligence to experience and see God as omnipresent.

5. Even-mindedness and being the same and unaffected in pain and pleasure, success and failure, adversity and prosperity, honour and disgrace, heat and cold, pleasant and unpleasant experiences, etc.

6. Designed, well-planned and regular life of a Karmayogi who exercises perfect control over himself.

7. Considerate, self-contained and intent on oneself alone without looking for outward assistance and support for maintenance or well-being.

8. Righteousness and simplicity.

9. Control of mind and Senses (Sama and Dama) desires, passions and impulses (such as anger, envy, jealousy, revenge, etc.).

10. Resigned, tranquil (not craving for anything) and cheerful under all circumstances and environments good, bad, favourable and unfavourable.

circumstances) and disinterested¹¹ action, being free from egotism¹², craving, sin¹³, fear¹⁴, selfishness¹⁵, greed¹⁶, anger¹⁷, hatred¹⁸, lust¹⁹ and attachment²⁰

11. Performing all action as duty and sacrifice (service) to God and cause of virtue without desire, hope of reward or personal gain (Nishkama Karma).

12. Personal vanity, perverted intelligence in misunderstanding body for soul in thought and actions.

13. Non-conformity with natural laws as expounded in Sastras.

14. Ignorance of self plus mental timidity, physical weakness, wrong or improper behaviour.

15. Keeping personal interests in view above all other considerations—good, noble and benevolent.

16. Covetousness, avarice, ignoble craving for usurpation or possession.

17. Sudden growth of the Rajas (diseased mind under the impulse of Dvesha (dislike) which causes a temporary dislocation in the sound working of the nervous system, the memory and judgment of beings).

18. Absence of love and fellowship with God and His creatures. Negative quality (Dvesha) and perverted action of mind to look down on others under a grossly exaggerated and inflated idea of one's own individuality.

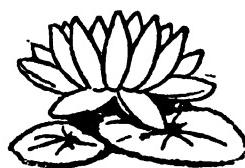
19. Incessant desire or craving and passionate urge (specially carnal) for worldly enjoyments which leads human mind astray from the simple and straight path of self-realization.

20. Absence of Vairagya or the correct understanding as to the nature and duration of life and its surroundings.

to pleasure, power and possessions. Progress or success on this path knows no retrogression or loss of labour even after death.

Both paths lead to the same destination but in the former or non-dualistic²¹ path of emancipation through will-power, self-confidence, energy and courage, the Jñāni²² awakens in spiritual love²³ and self-realization²⁴ and finds God one with him in the bosom; while in the other or dualistic path of Worship through resignation, self-surrender, supplication and fear, the devotee²⁵ swim across the ocean of the world (Saṃsāra)²⁶, through right conduct, selfless actions, balanced mind and one-pointed intelligence and steadfast devotion, and finally

embracing and becoming one with his Lord on the shore. A great majority of the seekers after truth travel midway between Sāṅkhyā and Yoga which they consider as the two synchronised branches of the same thought and the author of *Bhagavadgītā* apparently advocates the same plan under this chapter which He calls "Sāṅkhyā Yoga". The followers of these three paths have, however, to lead the same holy, harmonious and blissful life of "plain living and high thinking" and of "doing right and trusting in God" by which they would travel the path of one-pointed intelligence and perfect happiness and peace and unmistakably reach the same goal of "Nirvāna"²⁷ of being immortal and one with Divine (Sat-chit-ānanda).



21. The Vedantic view of holding life and existence as the manifestation of God Himself.

22 and 24. The knowledge which identifies self with His creator as His manifestation. A Jñāni is a God-intoxicated person and must, in spirit, be the facsimile of God and His attributes.

23. The law and medium of the manifestation of God in universe through which the individual could see, converse and approach Him.

25. Sons and servants (or maids—Gopis) of God who are constantly and exclusively attached to and dependent on Him alone.

26. The mentally depicted (non-realistic) pen-picture of the world of illusions, feelings and perceptions which has only one Reality behind it.

27. Merging in the personality and identity of God and His attributes.

The Later South Indian Vaishnava Saints

By K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

I shall describe here the evolution of the later South Indian Vaisnavism. The Vaiṣṇava cult is as old as Hinduism itself and the *Bhāgavata* tradition gave it a special emphasis. Though the cult is woven largely round the personalities of Rāma and Krṣṇa, and though the source-books for the lives of those incarnations are Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa* and Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* and *Harivamśa* and *Brahmavaivarta purāṇa* and *Bhāgavata* which belong to North India and are in Sanskrit, yet the finest efflorescence of Vaisnavism is to be met in South India in the Tamil country and in the inspired hymns of the Alvars in the Tamil tongue. A similar wonderful phenomenon is seen also in regard to Saivism. Saivism also is as old as Hinduism and is woven around the divine personalities of Śiva and Pārvatī and Vināyaka and Subrahmaṇya. The source-books (Purāṇas and Āgamas) in regard to them belong to North India and are in Sanskrit. Yet the finest efflorescence of Saivism also is to be met in South India in the Tamil country and in the inspired hymns of the great poet-saints whose works have been collected as *Thevaram* and *Tiruvachakam* and *Tirupugazh*. I have already described the lives and teachings of the earlier and later Śaiva saints of South India and of the earlier Vaiṣṇava saints (Alvars) of South India. I shall describe herein the later South Indian Vaiṣṇava saints.

NATHAMUNI

His traditional date is the Śrāvaṇa month in the 3685th year of the Kali

era (*Sobhakritu*). His historical date is the latter half of the ninth century A. D. He was a very pious man. His name was Ranganathacharya. He had a son named Iswaramuni. Nathamuni went on a pilgrimage all over India. From his life divested of all its legendary accretions we can easily gather that he was able to collect the *Prubandham* or *Tiruvoimozhi* songs (Tamil Vaiṣṇava religious lyrics) which had been lost owing to the lapse of time and the neglect of later centuries.

Popular tradition says that he lived for 500 years and died about 920 A. D. He was born in Viranārāyanapuram which is the modern Kattu Mannargudi, South Arcot District. His passion for the *Tiruvoimozhi* hymns was excited when some pilgrims recited ten stanzas composed by Nammalvar in praise of God Śri Aravamuda of Kumbakonam. The stanzas concluded with the word "these ten out of the thousand composed by Satakopa". He requested them to sing the other poems also but they did not know them. It is said that eventually the Alvar himself showed grace to him and taught him all the verses. He recovered all the 4000 stanzas of *Tiruvoimozhi* and introduced the ritual of regular recitation of the stanzas in the temples of God Viṣṇu in the Tamil Nad.

There is a tradition that Nathamuni was an adept in Yoga and was the last person to practise it in South India. This shows that Vaisnavism definitely broke away in practice from the older

combination of Yoga and Bhakti by stressing the latter overmuch and practically killing the former under the crushing double weight of verbal overpraise and actual indifference. The Smartas, and the Smartas alone, kept up the traditional emphasis on Yoga but even they fell away later on from the older doctrines by stressing Jñāna inordinately and killing Yoga under the same crushing double weight of verbal overpraise and actual indifference.

Nathamuni was the author of *Nyāyatattva* and *Yoga Rahasya* but those works are not now extant. The only Tamil stanzas of his composition that are now available are those prefixed to the hymns of Nammalvar and Mathurakavi Alvar and Perialvar.

Two anecdotes relating to his life are interesting. One relates to the tunes of the Tamil Vedas as the *Tiruvoimozhi* is popularly called. Nathamuni set the poems to celestial tunes (*Devagāna*). One day a dispute arose in the court of the Chola king at the Gangaikondacholapuram between a courtesan who sang the tunes in the celestial style, and a courtesan who sang the tunes in the terrestrial style. The king preferred the latter style. The former dancing girl then went on pilgrimage singing the songs in the unappreciated celestial styles. Nathamuni appreciated her style of song. The king thereupon went to see him. Nathamuni made the king realize his musical powers. He asked many bronze plates to be sounded simultaneously and then stated accurately the pitch of each note. He made the king realize the beauty of the celestial styles of song.

The other anecdote brings Nathamuni and the great Tamil poet Kamban together. Kamban took his work to various persons and places for approval. One of such persons was Nathamuni who was at the head of the Pandits of Srirangam. After some criticisms, Nathamuni set the seal of his approval on the greatest epic of the Tamil tongue. Kamban then composed a poem of 100 stanzas on Nammalvar.

Nathamuni went on a long pilgrimage and in the course of his tour his grandson was born on the banks of the Jumna and was named Yamunacharya.

It was Yamunacharya that laid the deep and broad foundations of Vaiśnavism. It was his teaching that was afterwards expanded by Sri Ramanujacharya.

One day the Chola king rode at the head of a hunting party along the road near Nathamuni's house at Viranarayanaapuram. Nathamuni was so engrossed in devotion that he thought that it was Śrī Rāma and his brother and others that rode along. Full of meditative rapture he ran after the party and fell dead of fatigue at Gangaikondapuram. His son discovered him there and performed his obsequies. It was Nathamuni that was the first systematizer of Vaiśnavism and the Vaiśnava Tamil scriptures.

He had eight pupils of whom the most important was Pundarikākṣa alias Uyyakondar. It seems that on one occasion he escorted Nathamuni's wife Aravindappavi to her father's house and was there served with stale cooked rice as he was supposed to be of inferior caste. But he was quite pleased with his

reception. Nathamuni admired his even temper and noble nature and gave him the name of Uyyakondar. Uyyakondar's disciple was Rama Misra alias Manakkal Nambi who was afterwards the Guru or teacher of Nathamuni's grandson Yamunacharya.

YAMUNACHARYA (ALAVANDAR)

He was born in the first decade of the tenth century A. D. in the town of Viranarayananpura which was the birth-place of Nathamuni. He was initiated in the study of the Vedas by Manakkal Nambi. He studied under Mahābhāṣya Bhatta and mastered all the lore of the day in a very short time as he had a quick mind and a retentive memory. The court pandit, Akki Alvan, was getting tributes from the other pandits of the locality including Mahābhāṣya Bhatta. One day he came to collect the tribute but Bhatta was absent. Yamunacharya who was there flatly refused the payment of the tribute and Akki Alvan challenged the pandit to a scholarly tournament. The young boy accepted the challenge and went to the court. The queen attracted by his intelligent and handsome looks betted as against the king that the young scholar would win. Yamunacharya won in the contest. He propounded three puzzles which floored his elderly rival. He made three pronouncements, viz., that the king is all powerful and that the queen was a chaste woman and that Akki Alvan's mother was not a barren woman and challenged Akki Alvan to disprove the statements. Akki Alvan was at his wits' end and was floored by the puzzles. Yamunacharya solved them to the satisfaction of all. The queen then

hailed him as Ālavandar (victor) and by that name he has been known ever since.

From that time Alavandar was in high favour with the king. He got grants of land from the king and was highly respected by all. He lived in a palace and had a large retinue. He married and had four sons. Manakkal Nambi yearned to call him to the higher spiritual life which had been led by Nathamuni. But he was not able to get access to the wealthy and lordly Alavandar. He used to give greens to the cook of Alavandar to cook the same for his master. This went on for six months. One day he did not give the same and Alavandar asked the cook why it was not served. On learning that it had been brought daily by a person, he desired to see him. He then met Manakkal Nambi. The latter taught him the essence of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in eighteen days. Alavandar asked him what was the means of realizing God. Nambi told him that the means was Prapatti or self-surrender to God. He took him to Srirangam to show him the treasure left by Nathamuni to him. There the sight of God Ranganātha filled his heart with overflowing love. He became an ascetic and wrote the well-known works *Chatusloki*, *Stotra-atnam*, *Āgama-pramāṇyam*, *Ātmasiddhi*, *Samvitsiddhi*, *Īswarasiddhi* and *Gitartha-sangraha*.

In the above *Siddhitraya* (three Siddhis) he proves the separateness of soul from God and the supremacy of God. In doing so he refers to the Chola king as the then reigning sovereign and says, the statement that the king has no

second (Advitiya) in the famous Upaniṣadic teaching *Ekam Eva Advitiyam* merely means that there is no other like him and does not preclude his having wife and children, and that in the same way the description that God is Advitiya (non-dual) merely means that He is supreme and does not negative the separateness of the souls from God. Though the name of the king is not given in the work, he probably refers to the Chola king Raja Raja the Great who reigned from 985 A. D. to 1012 A. D. who was the overlord of India at that time. In the *Ātmasiddhi* there is a reference to "Suresani Vachat". This refers to the works of Sri Sureswaracharya, the disciple of Sri Sankaracharya.

In his *Āgama-pramāṇya*, he proves the truth of the doctrines of the *Bhāgavata* or *Pāñcharātra* school. The *Pāñcharātra* Āgamas describe the details of the life of a devotee of God Viṣṇu. His *Gitārtha-Saṅgraha* is a work of rare merit and compresses the teachings of the *Gitā* in thirty small stanzas and is the admitted basis of the famous *Bhāṣya* of Sri Ramanuja on the *Gitā*. His

Stotra-ratna is a gem of devotional poetry and is in a class apart by itself.

There is a story that he requested Nathamuni's disciple Kurukai-Kavalappar to teach him the secret of Yoga and that the latter promised to do so on a certain day which was to be the date of his death. Alavandar went to Trivandrum to worship God there and let pass by inadvertence the day fixed by Kurukai-Kavalappar. It is stated that thus the secret path of Yoga was lost to the world.

It is said that one day he went to Conjeevaram to see Ramanuja, who was rising into prominence as a scholar. At that time Ramanuja was a student under the Advaita teacher Yādavaprakāsa. Alavandar returned to Srirangam without personally meeting Ramanuja. He died about 1040 A. D. His last wish was that Ramanuja should become a Vaiśnava and systematize and establish Vaiśnavism. This prayer of his was abundantly fulfilled later on. He had many disciples among whom the most distinguished were Mahapurna, Gostipurna, Sri Saīlapurna and Maladhara.

(To be continued)

"Where the passion-bound soul sees only injustice, the good man, he who has conquered passion, sees cause and effect, sees the Supreme Justice. It is impossible for such a man to regard himself as treated unjustly, because he has ceased to see injustice. He knows that no one can injure or cheat him, having ceased to injure or cheat himself. However passionately or ignorantly men may act towards him, it cannot possibly cause him any pain, for he knows that whatever comes to him (it may be abuse and persecution) can only come as the effect of what he himself has formerly sent out. He, therefore, regards all things as good, rejoices in all things, loves his enemies, and blesses them that curse him, regarding them as the blind but beneficent instruments by which he is enabled to pay his moral debts to the Great Law."

—James Allen.



What Can Prayer Do ?

By SWAMI ASESHANANDA

Genuine heartfelt prayer can do wonders even in this age of doubt and scientific agnosticism. We are in the midst of a terrible conflagration. Ruthless passion has been let loose. Colossal devastation of a total war is creating a tremendous havoc. The whole world has gone out of joints and seems to be unhinged. To bring it back to its proper balance and to rehabilitate it to its normal condition, a certain amount of calm, introspective spirit is absolutely necessary. Ordinarily our life is crowded with too many external activities and we find no time to enter into the sanctuary of our mind and think awhile seriously. Circumstances have made us bond-slaves, have compelled us to become mere cogs in the machine which grinds us mercilessly day in and day out. War magnates, business speculators, smiling but poison-hearted diplomats and artful politicians are being deified, acclaimed as leaders of men. We worship them as our heroes and saviours. But we contemptibly look at a man of contemplation and consider him a monomaniac suffering from demented pathological disturbances. We ridicule and mock at a man of prayer as an idle vagabond, a visionary, a dreamer of fantastic dreams. But, on the contrary, a person who has got the power of gab, a professional talker who knows the jugglery of words and the method of manipulating his speech cleverly according to the tune of the audience is raised above and lifted to the skies "as a cynosure of the

neighbouring eyes." But true religion is far from talking. It is being and becoming. The core of religion rests not in words but on life, not in profession, but in spiritual edification. The essence of spirituality is embedded in the flowering of character, in the unfoldment of all the petals of virtues in solemn silence away from the din and clamour of a mad-dening crowd. It is to be had by a life of inwardness and self-introspection in a calm, congenial atmosphere, not vitiated by the dusty foul breeze of an artificial public life. In the view of the poet-seer of the Divine Ode, religion is a far cry where purity is absent. Religion steps in only when silence reigns and dominates the heart.

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च ।
जन्मशृद्युजराव्याधिदुखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥
मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरब्धभिचारिणी ।
विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिजनसंसदि ॥

(*Gita XIII. 8, 19*)

"Indifference towards the objects of senses, self-effacement and the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age, sickness and pain, unswerving devotion to Me through constant meditation, resort to solitude and aversion to society—these are the essential pre-requisites of a spiritual life."

Prayer is the pilgrim's staff, the stick in the hand of the mountain climber for averting a fall and promoting an ascent, step by step, towards the highest peak where the shrine of the Deity stands. Prayer gives the surest

passport to Heaven. It is the safest route that will lead the aspirant to his destined goal and endow him with the glorious and beatific vision of Reality. But the path is not strewn always with roses and sunshine. Many are the thorns, various are the difficulties on the way. Clouds will grow thick. Passions will muster strong. Crooked desires and bewitching temptations will assail and try to seduce the pilgrim on his journey and cut short his progress. But a strong, determined soul will remain unshakable and aloft in spite of trying enticements and onslaughts of this sordid, unscrupulous world. He will be calm and unruffled in the midst of Himalayan dangers. Like Prahlāda he will hold fast to prayer as the sheet anchor of his life and never leave it on any account. However pressing, however hard the pull from his professional calls and domestic duties may be, he will never fail to snatch an opportunity. He will invariably, in the midst of his multifarious preoccupations, keep by a few moments and spend regularly in spiritual practices and divine communion. A daily habit of prayer is an asset and an invaluable acquisition. To curb and tone down the impetuous tendencies of the mind, is there any other weapon so strong and invincible as this? Surely it is not a dead weight nor a hindrance to normal avocations of life. It never stands in the way of material progress of man. It rather helps and promotes his well-being and prosperity. Keeping his mind serene and hand energized, a man of prayer can work tremendously without feeling any fatigue. To him, prayer is the breath of air to sustain

him, the very mother to console and inspire him when he is in the vortex of grievous difficulty. He draws unstinted succour and strength from this powerhouse of energy which never fails in regard to him. Thomas Aquinas, a Christian mystic, writes—

"Action should be something added to the life of prayer and not something taken away from it. If anyone desires to build a strong edifice which will face the fury of the storm and the dashing of the waves let him know for certain that it must be built on the rock of prayer and not on the loose sand of pelf, power or pedantry."

Through prayer we can listen to divine music, the symphony of concord and harmony, no matter however noisy, clamorous and disturbing the situation we are placed in. Prayer is the bridge between man and God. It links the individual soul with its superior counterpart—the universal soul, the eternal fountain-head of all being and existence. A man of constant meditation is elevated to a region where light shines for ever and darkness is no more. Even if the tree of life is shorn of all external charm and glamour, he feels inwardly like brother Lawrence, the presence of God to cheer him up and reinvigorate his drooping faith. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gitā*—"Of all offerings, I am the offering of silent prayer." An ardent devotee will never miss a day without prayer and remembrance. To his vision a bad day is not a cloudy day with storm and rain but a day when his heart is cheerless and feels no glow to utter the name of God. He drives out ruthlessly this set-back of mind. He

fervently craves for divine grace to enthuse and recharge his soul. His prayer does not go in vain. Heavenly blessings come. The passing cloud of doubt and despair is no sooner dispelled by an Almighty Hand. The struggling pining soul gets its mooring. The Bhakta is carried on and on by the wings of adoration and prayer to the soaring height of divine felicity. He attains the highest peak of illumination where he remains speechless but ever contented in God-realization. The state is beautifully described by Śrī Bhagavān in the *Gītā* where He speaks in glorious terms about the marvellous influence and efficacy of prayer.

"That in which the mind is at rest restrained by the practice of concentration and prayer, that in which he beholds the spirit through the mind and rejoices in the spirit; that in which he knows the boundless joy beyond the reach of the senses and grasped only by the understanding and that in which when he is established, he never departs from reality; that on gaining which he feels there is no greater gain and that in which he abides and is not moved even by the heaviest of afflictions—let that be known as the kernel of meditation—*Yoga*."

It is this union with God, the vision of the Almighty Divine that a seeker after knowledge or a faithful devotee longs for. It is the acme of life, the greatest acquisition of man. It is no doubt a vision, a sight but the seeing is to be done not with eyes. God can never be seen in the same way as we see a fine motor-car, a grand building or a beautiful landscape. God can never be

objectified. He will ever remain the witness, the eternal subject of our thought and vision. The apex of prayer, the culmination of meditation is in Samadhi. In Samādhi seeing and being coalesce. Seeing of God is not to be taken literally. We have no proper vehicle to express this indescribable experience. It is just like a dumb man enjoying a fruit *Mukāśwādanavat*. It is spoken figuratively as all human language is faulty. It is a symbolic expression of conveying an indefinable state, from which all words come back without attaining along with the mind—"Tato Vacho Nivartante Aprāpya Manasa Saha". The same truth was inculcated to Nachiketā by Yama in *Kaṭhopaniṣad*.—

"His form is not within the field of vision, none can see Him with the eyes. He is revealed by the intuition of the heart together with the purified intellect and mind. Those who know Him become immortal."

The secret of success in spiritual practices lies in complete self-effacement and unadulterated sincerity of purpose. There must be a harmony, an absolute correspondence between thought and action, which will liquidate the least shadow of duplicity. The right type of prayer is always answered and attended by transcendental experiences which work as an uplifting influence and a driving force. The revolutionary effect of super-natural visions is not momentary. It abides throughout the long episode of his life. It remains permanently till the enactment of his life-drama is finished. The vision of God is styled as hallucination

by psycho-analysts. Without treading the field and gathering facts they make sweeping categorical remarks which are baseless. Seeing one or two cases they make hasty generalizations which are untrue and unfounded. They have no right to pass judgments in matters which are beyond their jurisdiction. No doubt there are cases of fraud. But they must make distinction between visions and visions. True spiritual visions are not a phantasy, a day dream of a visionary. They are real, tangible facts of experience which make such an indelible impress on the life of the possessor that he will uphold it even if he is put on the cross or nailed against the wall. What a miracle genuine, unfaked visions can create? A sinner is transformed into a saint. A fool is converted into a sage. The whole personality undergoes a thorough reform towards holy-living. It is not a truism but a fact. As a loadstone metamorphoses base metals into gold, similarly visions which come in the wake of sincere prayer have the potency of transforming man, the animal, into man, the divine.

Real, whole-souled prayer comes when we are in grief and not in comfort and luxury. Adversity does more good to man than plenty and prosperity. It is during these moments of travail and suffering when the cup of misery is full to the brim, when the whole world seems so dark and dismal that we come to realize the hollowness of human sympathy, rottenness of sense-pleasures and unsightly ugliness of material values. In these moments alone dream disappears, light flashes and we come face

to face with the grand mystery of all existence. Every devotee, every aspirant, all over the world, has had to pass through a hard trial, a severe test, the test of a fire-bath and a poignant crisis which is known in the book of the mystics as the dark night of the soul. It will not be out of place if we elucidate our point by referring to one example by taking a page from the life-history of Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of modern India. After the sudden death of his father, the burden of supporting a pretty big family fell upon his shoulders and he was forced to seek for an employment. Starving and bare-footed he went many days from office to office under the scorching heat of the sun with an application in hand but stern refusals and sad disappointments were his lot. The door was banged against him, as it were, wherever he proceeded. To quote his own words—"The summer was over and the rains set in. The search for a job still went on. One evening after a whole day's fast and exposure to rain I was returning home with tired limbs and jaded mind. Overpowered with exhaustion and unable to move a step forward, I sank down on the outer plinth of a house on the roadside. Various thoughts crowded in on my mind. I argued within myself—"Does God really exist, and, if so, does He really hear the fervent prayer of a grief-stricken man? Then why is there no response to my passionate appeals? Why is there so much misery, if He is benign and benevolent? If He is all-merciful why then should millions of people die for want of a morsel of food? Reason failed me. I was in a dilemma oscillating between doubt and atheism.

At last the spirit of humility and resignation came. Suddenly I felt as if by some Inscrutable, Divine Power, the veil was lifted and the coverings of my soul were removed one after another. All my former misgivings regarding the co-existence of divine justice and mercy and the presence of misery in the creation of an all-loving Providence were automatically solved. Dispassionate outlook dawned. Inner vision was awakened. I could unravel the enigma. I found the meaning of it all. Waves may roll and tempests may rage but deep down the surface is the sea of peaceful tranquillity. There flows the perennial stream of sweet calmness and gentle kindness. There is a hand to heal and a heart to feel. We are not alone in our suffering. Doubt melted away. Certainty prevailed. As I proceeded homewards, there was no trace of fatigue in the body and the mind was refreshed with wonderful strength and peace." Later on Swamiji wrote to one of his friends in Madras when the latter was in the midst of a severe domestic affliction. He tried to bring home to the friend's mind the salient fact that misery was a friend in disguise and messenger from God to awaken sleeping souls to their real nature. The necessity of prayer was also emphasized with stirring words of beautiful sentiments. He wrote—"Cease not brother to send up

petitions day and night. Cease not to say day and night, 'Thy will be done.' Blessed are those that mourn for they shall be comforted. Pray, pray in this strain—'Give us strength, oh Thou who saw Thy whole family destroyed before Thine eyes with Thine hands crossed on Thy breast. Come, Lord, Thou great Teacher, who hast taught us that the soldier is only to obey and speak not. Come, Lord, come Arjuna's charioteer, and teach me as Thou once taughtest him, that resignation in Thyself is the highest end and aim of this Life, so that with those great ones of old I may also firmly and resignedly cry—Om Śrī Kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu!"

What a marvellous power the name of the Lord holds:—

मधुरमधुरमेतन्मङ्गलं मङ्गलानीं
सकलनिगमवहीसत्कर्लं चित्स्वरूपम्।
सद्गुरपि परिगीतं श्रद्धया हेलया वा
भृगुवर नरमात्रं तारयेत् कृष्णनाम ॥

"The name of Kṛṣṇa is sweeter than sweetness itself, the best among all auspicious things, the highest fruit of the creeper-like Vedas. If uttered once with reverential faith it can deliver man from all wordly bondage. Even if repeated indifferently, it goes not in vain but brings him immense good."



The Kalyana-Kalpataru.



Blessing a Devotee

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवाबिश्यते ॥



KALYANAM KALDARSHAKU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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ॐ नमो भगवते उत्तमश्लोकाय नम आर्यलक्षणशीलव्रताय नम
उपशिक्षितात्मन उपासितलोकाय नमः साधुवादनिकषणाय नमो ब्रह्मण्य-
देवाय महापुरुषाय महाराजाय नम इति ॥

(*Bhāgavata V. xix. 3*)

"Om. Obeisance to Śrī Rāma of foremost fame; obeisance to Śrī Rāma, who was vowed to the conduct characterizing a noble soul; obeisance to Śrī Rāma, who disciplined Himself and served the world; obeisance to Śrī Rāma, who was the touch-stone of good reputation; obeisance to Śrī Rāma, the God, who is Himself Brahma; obeisance to Śrī Rāma, that Great Puruṣa, that Great King."



The Glory of Saints—I

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

SAINTHOOD IS ATTAINED THROUGH GOD'S GRACE

In the hierarchy of men in this world the position occupied by saints is the highest of all. Celestials and men, kings and ordinary citizens—all regard the saints to be superior to them. The lives of saints alone are blessed. All men should therefore supplicate God for the attainment of sainthood. Here the question may be raised, is sainthood attainable through effort, or through God's grace, or through both effort and grace? If it is attainable through effort alone, why do not men in general make the effort and become saints? If it is held to be attainable through God's grace, then such grace falls on all constantly in an illimitable quantity. Therefore, why do not men in general attain this state? If both effort and grace are held responsible then the importance and value of grace are both reduced, for without the co-operation of effort grace alone fails to bring sainthood. The answer to this problem is that God-realization or attainment of sainthood is possible only through God's grace. In fact, he alone who has realized God may be called a saint. The word 'Sat' denotes God. Therefore a saint is he who knows the real truth about God, or has realized God. In a secondary sense, he also who is qualified to attain God may be called a saint, for he has reached near the goal of God-Realization and may shortly attain Him.

Again, the question may be raised that when God's grace falls on all, then all people should realize God, and yet why does this not actually happen? The answer to this is that all people may realize God if they have intense desire for such realization, or possess faith in divine grace. But how many are the men that seek God-realization, or have faith in divine grace? He who seeks God or possesses faith, certainly realizes Him. In opposition to this view it may be said that all people entertain desire for God-realization. But this is not correct. Such desire is not desire in the true sense of the term. In the world we find that he who seeks wealth is ready to do anything for that purpose, or is prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of wealth. How many people are there who seek God with the same amount of intensity? When sought, wealth is gained only if one's Prārabdha (past Karma about to bear fruit) is favourable; if Prārabdha is unfavourable, it is not gained. But when God is sincerely sought, He is certainly realized, for God is no dead matter like material wealth. Material wealth cannot respond to one's desire by entertaining a similar desire, but God Himself seeks the person who seeks Him, and the truth is incontrovertible that a desire of God is never unfruitful, that it is infallible. Therefore through the awakening of God's desire, the desire of the devotee automatically gets fulfilled without any effort on the devotee's part.

But this much ought to be remembered that God seeks the devotee only when the devotee seeks Him. If it is asked, why does not God seek a devotee without the latter seeking him ? The answer is that God really possesses no desire of His own, and the desire to meet a devotee is awakened in Him only when the devotee seeks Him. Here the doubt may be raised that if God meets a devotee only when His desire is awakened through the desire of the devotee, how is the superiority or importance of divine grace maintained ? For desire or seeking also is a type of effort. The answer to this is that the mere desire to realize God cannot be termed an effort. If, however, this is regarded an effort, this much of effort is quite unavoidable and indispensable. When carefully considered, it will be recognized that God alone is attainable through mere desire for Him. In this wide world people desire to obtain so many different kinds of objects, but practically gain nothing by mere entertainment of those desires. Material objects are gained when a desire is joined by a favourable Prārabdha and there is requisite effort to obtain them, but in the matter of God-realization success is attained if only there is desire for the same. Effort which follows the desire in the latter case is God's own work, for it is always guided by Divine aid and the devotee becomes only an instrument. The Lord said to Arjuna, "These warriors are already slain by Me, be you only an instrument" (*Gītā XI. 33*). Even so God Himself does everything for the success of the effort for God-realization; the devotee, who cherishes desire for realization is made only an instrument.

Those who regard God-realization to be attainable only through one's own effort are not granted direct vision of God. They may attain Knowledge through much labour and hardship, but in that case also they have to surrender themselves to the Preceptor. The Lord Himself says,

तदिदृ प्रणिपातेन परिप्रस्तेन सेवया ।
उपदेश्यन्ति ते शानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदश्चिनः ॥

(*Gītā IV. 34*)

"Learn this truth. If you prostrate yourself at the feet of the wise, who possess knowledge of Brahma, render them all forms of service, and question them with a guileless heart, again and again, those Mahātmās possessing the truth about the Paramātmā will instruct you and convey that knowledge to you."

The Śruti says,

उत्तिष्ठत जग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत्.

भुरस्य धारा निश्चिता दुरत्यया दुर्गं पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति ।

(*Kaṭha I. iii. 14*)

"Arise, awake ! Acquire Knowledge by approaching the wise, who describe this path as difficult to tread as the sharp edge of a razor."

Ego is the root cause of one's regarding personal effort alone as sufficient to bring about God-realization. In order to root out this evil from the heart of the devotee, God places him under various difficulties and proves it to the devotee that it is an error on the part of man to regard personal effort as the cause of success in activities. Such difficulties created for crushing out the ego are indications of special divine favour. The *Keṇopaniṣad* contains a story where it is stated that the king of celestials Indra, and the gods of Fire, Air, etc., after a victory in war, regarded to have won it

by their own strength, and therefore began to feel very proud. Thereupon as a mark of grace God appeared before them in the form of a Yakṣa, and revealing to them who He was removed their pride. When the gods of Fire and Air failed in the test and realized that inherently they possessed no strength, it was then out of favour God revealed His identity to Indra through Umā. Man feels proud when he attains some success in life, but in course of time unavoidable difficulties prove to him that all his personal effort was useless, then out of despair he seeks refuge in God and cries out from the bottom of his heart—"O Lord, save me from this terrible danger. I am wholly powerless. It was a grievous error on my part to regard that I would redeem myself by self-effort alone. Pressed on all sides by enemies like worldly love and hatred, lust and anger, etc., I now fully realize that without Your grace, it is not only difficult, but almost impossible for me to get freed from them." When giving up egotism, man surrenders himself thus with a sincere heart, God takes him under His protection and gives him hope and encouragement, for this is the Lord's positive announcement—

सङ्गदेव प्रपञ्चाय तवासीति च याचते ।

अभयं सर्वभूतेन्मो ददाम्येतद्रत्तं मम ॥

(V. Rāmāyaṇa VI. xviii. 33)

"He who surrendering himself to Me, says even once, 'O Lord, I am Thine', I free him from every form of earthly fear; this is My vow."

One feels amazed that even then man does not surrender himself to God and make himself blessed !

God, the ocean of grace, cherishes so much compassion for Jivas that

there is no limit to the same. To compare divine grace with the ocean is also a dispraise though disguised as a praise. For the ocean has a limit, whereas divine grace has no limit whatever. It is far more extensive than the largest of conception formed about it by the greatest of men. In fact, no proper conception can be formed of it. There is nothing in the world on the analogy of which the truth about it can be brought home to one's mind. The illustration of the mother also falls short; for there are innumerable Jīvas in creation all of whom take their birth from their respective mothers. If the affection in the heart of those mothers are all combined, they will not equal a drop of water from that ocean of grace. Such being the case, what other object in the world can be compared with it ? And yet the illustration of the mother is taken because it is superior to all other illustrations. Whatever the mother does for her child, she does out of love. The child also realizes this to some extent. When the child begins to play mischief, the mother with a view to reform the child scolds and chastizes it, and leaving it alone removes herself to some distance. In that circumstance also the child will seek the mother. When some one asks, "Who has beaten you ?" the child will name the mother as the assailant. Now if that person says, 'Do not go to her in future' the child will turn a deaf ear to him and will weep all the more for the mother. An attempt is made to frighten it by saying, 'Mother will beat you again', but this makes no impression on the child, and regardless of consequences it would still seek to go to the mother.

It weeps no doubt, and yet wants to be with the mother. The child becomes calm and pacified when the mother gives it a caress, wipes the tears from its eyes and comforts it. He who like the child trusting in the mother realizes the true character of the mercy of God, and when chastized by God weeps only for God, similarly receives God's caress and is comforted by God. And he who acquires special knowledge of Divine grace is undoubtedly all the more blessed.

When the child seeks to go upstairs, the mother takes it near the steps and encourages it to climb them. She says, 'Go up child, go up; you need not fear a fall; I am behind you. Look, I am holding you by the hand.' Thus encouraging and comforting it, she takes the child step by step. She keeps herself on the alert that the child may not suffer a fall. As soon as she notices the slightest displacement, she helps the child with her hand and gives it support to climb. When the child feels it difficult to climb, it turns its eyes towards the mother, as if seeking her help. The mother at once gives it support and encourages it the more. If the child slips, she at once takes it upon her lap, and does not allow it to fall. Even so God Himself looks to the growth and protection of one who depends on Him like a child and makes the devotee only an instrument. The mother who is an earthly being may on occasions fail to help a falling child owing to both carelessness and incapacity, but almighty, omniscient and supremely compassionate God, the knower of all hearts, in no case allows a devotee, who has taken refuge under

Him, to suffer a fall. On the contrary, helping a devotee to climb step by step, He takes the former to the topmost floor to reach which is the supreme goal of a Jiva's life. This proves that the effort proceeds from God, the devotee on his part has to do nothing but to cherish the desire, and that is how he is made an instrument in the effort. When out of egotism the child feels that it is climbing by its own unaided efforts, the mother withdraws herself a little and says, "Now, climb yourself," but without her aid the child fails to climb. It begins to fall and starts weeping. The mother then runs to its aid and prevents it from falling. Even so, the person priding on self-effort may suffer a fall. It should be remembered, however, that divine grace does not mean that man should turn himself into a drone, that he should refrain from every form of activity. To regard so is an abuse of Lord's grace. When the mother helps the child to climb the steps, all the effort is actually made by her, but the child also has to exert itself according to the mother's directions. The child who does not exert as directed by the mother, or exerts in the wrong direction, is threatened and sometimes chastized by the mother for its own good.

When the mother chastizes, she does so out of the feelings of love, it is also an expression of her compassion. Even so God also gives us warning from time to time out of His compassion. The purport of this all is that just as a child surrendering itself and its activities to the mother shows itself to be wholly dependent on her, even so we should surrender ourselves and all our activities to God and throw ourselves helplessly at

His feet. He who thus like a simple child surrenders himself to God with supreme reverence and faith, is considered willing and qualified to receive divine grace and as the fruit of that realizes God through the Lord's grace. In short, God is realized through the Lord's own grace; in other words, grace is the sole cause of such realization. But grace does not make man worthless. Grace alone leads man to make the supreme effort. Apart from God the Jiva's effort is useless; he is only an instrument in the hand of God.

CHARACTERISTIC QUALITIES OF THE SAINT

He who truly knows the truth and secret of grace of that ocean of grace, God, becomes an ocean of tenderness himself and a friend of all beings. The Lord said in the *Gitā*—‘तुहर्द सर्वभूतानां शत्रा मा शान्तिमृच्छति’ ‘Knowing Me as the friend of all beings, My devotee attains peace.’ The implication of the statement is that he who knows God to be the friend of all beings having taken refuge in God becomes fearless and having attained supreme peace and supreme bliss becomes the very image of tenderness himself. That is why it is quite in the fitness of things for the Lord to say that one who knows Him to be the friend of all beings attains peace. Sainthood is deserved only by such God-realized souls. Out of amusement some people go so far as to say that such saints are greater than even God Himself. Sri Tulsidasji says—

मेरे मन प्रमु अस विलासा । राम ते अधिक राम कर दासा ॥
राम सियु धन सज्जन धीरा । चंदन तरु हरि संत समीरा ॥

“If God is the ocean, the saint is the cloud; if God is the sandal wood,

the saint is the breeze. Therefore, I believe that Sri Rāma's servant is greater than Sri Rāma Himself.”

Now, ponder a little over these illustrations. The ocean is full of water, but the water is of no use to anybody. It can neither be drunk, nor used for fertilizing the land. But when that very water, drawn by the sun is formed into clouds, and showered on earth, it gives pleasure not only to the peacock, the sparrow and cultivators, but spreads a thrill of pleasure throughout the world. Even so God, the embodiment of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, is present everywhere, but so long as devotees who know God's Truth do not spread His glory everywhere, people of the world cannot know Him. When the saints deriving from God virtues like equanimity, peace, love, knowledge and bliss, etc., shower them like clouds throughout the world, then not only seekers of knowledge and practicants in the form of the peacock, sparrow, cultivators, etc., but people generally of the whole world derive benefit from them. Had there been no devotee, who would have spread the virtues, glory, greatness and power of God throughout the world? From this point of view the devotee is greater than God. Secondly, the sandal no doubt contains scent, but had there been no breeze who would have carried that scent to other trees and transformed their fibre into sandal-wood? Even so, if devotees had not spread God's glory, wicked men of evil conduct could not be transformed into men of virtue and righteous conduct deriving their virtues and love from God. From this point of view also, the saints stand on a higher footing than

God. Spreading among all Jivas the qualities of equanimity, peace, love, knowledge and bliss, these saints attempt to make whoever comes in contact with them similar to God Himself.

THE SAINTS' TENDERNESS

In those saints no trace of any harshness and hatred can be detected. They become so very tender that the very sight of another's misery bleeds their heart. In another's good alone they recognize their own good. Their compassion is the purest form of compassion. The compassion at the back of which there is cowardice, attachment, false modesty, selfishness or fear is not a pure form of compassion. Just as God's compassion on all Jivas is unmotived, even so the saints look upon all with unmotived favour. However much they may be persecuted, the idea of retaliation never crosses their mind. If any show of retaliation is observed in any case, it is intended only to remove the vice of the persecutor and thereby make him pure. Thus this action also is an expression of the saint's compassion though in a disguised form. Just as parents punish their children for their reform with a loving heart even so the saints may make an exhibition of punishment, but good and nothing but good will result from it. The saints are the very repository of compassion. Those who contact them take, as if, a plunge in the ocean of tenderness. Their sight, their speech, their touch, and the very thought of them charm and fascinate men because of their tenderness. By whichever way they pass, they proceed like the cloud showering tenderness. The cloud does not shower always and every-

where, but the saint goes on showering everywhere incessantly. All beings get purified through his sight, speech, meditation and touch; the ground trodden by his feet gets sanctified. The dust touched by his feet becoming pure acquires the power of purifying others. Things seen, thought and touched by him also get pure—what to speak of the family in which he takes birth or the parents who give him birth? The place where such a saint takes birth or casts off the body acquires the sanctity of a pilgrimage. All places which have till now gained recognition as places of pilgrimage in the world have done so due to their association with God and His devotees. Not only so, even the sacred places which purify others, get purified through the touch of their feet.

The righteous king Yudhiṣṭhira—addressing Vidura, says,

भवद्विधा भागवतार्थीभूतः स्वयं विभोः
तीर्थाकुर्वन्ति तीर्थान्ति स्वात्मस्थेन गदाभूतः ॥

"O lord, devotees like you are themselves holy. Through God who is enthroned in their heart, they sanctify even the sacred places (rendered unholy by sinful men)."

कुलं पवित्रं जननी इतार्था
वसुधरा पुण्यवती न तेन ।
अपारसंविल्लुप्तसागरं दिम्भं
हानं परं ब्रह्मणि यस्य चेतः ॥

"Through the birth of one whose heart is absorbed in Supreme Brahma, the infinite ocean of Knowledge and Bliss, the family gets pure, the object of his mother's life gets fulfilled and the earth itself is sanctified."

These things automatically take place through his presence, he has not to do anything particularly to bring

them about. God seeks only the seeker who seeks him, but the tender-hearted saint keeps himself even prepared to do good to those who do not seek him or even to those who slander him or do him injury. The axe cuts the sandal-wood, but the sandal returns the injury by transferring its own scent to the handle of the axe.

काट धरसु मलय सुनु भाई । तिज गुन देर सुअंग बसाई ॥

The stories of Prahlāda, Ambarīṣa, etc., prove the truth of this statement. Therefore, it is quite reasonable to describe the devotee, though in amusement, as greater than God. As a benefactor the saint is superior even to the Ganges or the wish-yielding tree. The Ganges purifies and the wish-yielding tree fulfils one's desires by degrees when one goes to them. But the saint himself visits those who seek him and those who do not seek, and attempts to do good to their present life as well as the next. Now, it may be asked, when the saint seeks to do good to all why does not that actually come to pass ? The answer to this is that in a general way whoever contacts a saint derives some good, but real and special good is gained only by those who develop faith and love. If again, it is asked, why does not the saint enforce spiritual good on others, the answer is, supreme good cannot be enforced on another. The fly meets death by rushing into a flame. A kind-hearted man puts out the flame in order to save it, and thus do it supreme good, but the fly goes to another flame and is thus reduced to ashes. Thus it is extremely difficult to do good to those who do not seek their own good.

Does not the assertion that the saint does spiritual good only to those

who possess faith and love, and others derive good from him only in a general way, make him liable to the charge of partiality ? The answer to this is that it does not really make him so liable. Wherein lies the saint's fault if people owing to deficiencies in their faith and love fail to derive benefit from his infinite compassion which flows towards all in an equal measure. The sun sends its own rays to every object without any partiality or hesitation, but the glass alone catches its reflection and the sun-stone derives from it power to burn other objects. This does not happen because of any partiality in the sun. Even so people lacking faith and love are like logs and derive less benefit from the saint, whereas people possessing faith and love are like the sun-stone and derive the greatest benefit. Though the sun brings light to all in an equal measure, the owl feels it as darkness. The moon's brightness appears as an evil to the thief. The moon which wants to do good to all cannot be held responsible for this. Even so the saint does good to all, but like the owl, people possessed of wicked and vile natures show hostility to them owing to their lack of wisdom, and like the thief speak ill of them. What is the saint's crime in this ?

If it is asked when all can very clearly derive good from such tender-hearted souls, why do not people generally do so by cultivating association with them, or doing service to them ? The answer to this is that they do not know the virtues, glory and real nature of saints. Without knowledge of their real nature none can derive any

appreciable benefit from them. A dog thrusts its head into an earthen pot containing raw sugar. Then, hearing a sound behind it, it wants to run away. Owing to its fright and consequent confusion the earthen pot gets broken. The neck of the pot now begins to hang from the neck of the dog. Observing its plight a kind-hearted person takes up a stick and runs after the dog with the intention of breaking the part of the pot hanging from its neck and remove

its suffering. But the dog misreads the motive of the person. Seeing the man running with a stick in hand it imagines that his intention is to give it a sound beating. Therefore, it runs with greater speed and is deprived of the relief. Similarly, people fail to derive benefit from the saints owing to lack of understanding of their real nature, and interpreting their action in an adverse spirit. (*Kalyan*)

(To be continued)



The Stealing of Gopis' Butter and Garments—II

(Continued from the previous number)

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

Doubts are similarly raised on the sport of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa regarding the stealing of Gopis' garments. In the twenty-first chapter of Skandha X of the *Bhāgavata* it is stated that seeing the Lord's enchanting Form as well as sweet, loving sports, and hearing the note of the flute, the Gopis felt charmed and fascinated. In the twenty-second chapter, the Gopis devote themselves to spiritual practices in order that their Love may attain the highest level of completeness. This chapter states that the Lord appeared before them and brought fruition to their practices. Herein is described the story of the stealing of garments.

What the Gopis desired is clear from their spiritual practices. They craved for complete surrender to Śrī Kṛṣṇa—such at-one-ment or union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa that their soul, mind, the very breath and even the pores of the body might be full of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In autumn

they conversed with each other about the music of the flute and started their practices in the beginning of winter—the first month of winter—Mārgaśīrṣa, which among months is the Lord's glory. Delay was unbearable to them. In winter they started going for bath to the Jamunā early in the morning and cared not for comfort of the body. These cowherd-maids used to go in crowds, there was no feeling of jealousy or hostility among them. Chanting loudly the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa they used to go, they had no fear of the villagers or public opinion in the community itself. They used to take pure food specially prescribed for sanctified days, their eagerness for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was so intense that they gave up their reserve even in the presence of their parents. Making earthen images of the Goddess they used to offer her regular worship and performed Japa of the prescribed Mantra. They regarded this action of

theirs as quite proper and auspicious. In short, they completely surrendered at the Lord's feet their social status, family interests, virtues, bashfulness and individuality. They carried on Japa that they might get Śrī Nanda's Darling alone as their Lord and husband. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was already their Lord and husband in the true sense of the term. But from the point of view of sport, there was some amount of deficiency in their surrender. They were not approaching the Lord deprived of all their coverings, and carried some hesitancy with them. In order to remove this hesitancy and thus bring fruition to their Sādhana and make their surrender complete it was necessary to remove their coverings, it was absolutely essential to steal their robes, which formed those coverings. And this was what Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa did. It was with this object in view that God, the Lord of all Masters of Yoga, appeared on the bank of the Jamunā accompanied by his friends, the cowherd boys.

The practicant cannot completely surrender himself to God merely by his own effort, own strength, own thoughts and own resolve. Surrender also is an act; he who only seeks to surrender remains un-surrendered. In that state surrender of the soul becomes complete when God Himself appears before the practicant and approves of his resolve, and accepts the practicant who makes the resolve. Herein surrender attains completeness. On his own part, the duty of the practicant lies in preparing himself for surrender. It is God Himself who brings completeness to it.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the supreme Puruṣa, who manifested Himself on earth for sport; and yet when the Lord reveals His sport, He does not violate recognized conduct, rather He establishes the proper conduct. None can make any progress in the spiritual path by violating the rules of conduct. On the contrary, sincerity of the heart, purity and true love obstruct all violation of propriety of conduct. There was one deficiency in the effort made by the Gopīs for attaining Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Disregarding the scriptures as well as the recognized canon of right conduct, they used to take their bath in a nude state. They followed this practice, no doubt, out of ignorance, nevertheless it was necessary for God to reform them. The Lord compelled the Gopīs to atone for this fault of theirs. Those who in the name of Divine Love proceed to offend against morality and right conduct should read this incident with utmost care and try to realize what amount of respect was shown by the Lord to scriptural injunctions.

The culmination of formal devotion lies in devotion of which affection or attachment is the basis, and the latter is transformed into complete surrender. The Gopīs practised formal devotion; their heart had been already full of devotion of the loving type. Now, complete surrender must take place. This comes to pass through the stealing of garments.

Was it not a deficiency in the Sādhana of the Gopīs that they failed to go without covering near Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of Rasa, revealed before them without any obscuring object, for whose sake they

cared not for this world and the next, for earthly and other-worldly interests, for family and social prestige, for friends, relations and respected elders, to realize whom was the object of their present great spiritual effort, at whose feet they sacrificed everything they possessed, to meet whom face to face without the obstruction of any covering, which conceals Him, was the sole craving of their heart? Yes, it was certainly a deficiency. Fully realizing this, the Gopis appeared before Him shorn of their garments.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the sole Lord of the whole of Prakṛti, both animate and inanimate; He alone is the doer, enjoyer and witness of all actions. Among manifest and unmanifest objects, there is nothing which is before Him without a covering. He alone is all-pervading, the knower of hearts. He is the Ātmā (soul) of the Gopis, the Gopas and of the entire universe. People worship Him alone regarding Him in various relations as lord, teacher, father, mother, friend and husband, etc. The Gopis sought to realize as their husband this very God, knowing Him full well to be God Himself, the Lord of the Masters of Yoga, beyond both perishable matter and the imperishable Jīvatmā, the Supreme Puruṣa. From a study of the Śrimad Bhāgavata, Skandha X, in a reverential spirit, it will become clear, that the Gopis were fully aware of the truth about Śrī Kṛṣṇa and recognized Him as God. Even a tiro in spiritual culture can detect this when he reads the chapters on Music of the Flute, the Gopis' Song, the Song in Twins, and the Gopis' search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa when the

Lord disappeared from their midst. How can practicants who know God as God, who have established some relationship with Him and regard Him as Lord, friend, etc., can entertain any doubt in their heart about the transcendently sweet relation of the Gopis with God, and their spiritual efforts to realize Him in that relation?

The part played by the Gopis in this Divine sport is an ideal for all aspirants who have risen high in the spiritual ladder. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is God Himself, the only object of attainment of the Jīva. Our intellect and our sight are confined only to the body. That is why we imagine the love between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Gopis as bodily love, and tainted with desire. As the evil effect of our gross, physical desires we drag down that unearthly and transcendent sport to the region of Prakṛti. The mind of the Jīva remains merged in the desires of enjoyment, and are constantly swayed by the impulses of Tamoguna. It finds pleasure in dwelling on earthly objects and is hence constantly attacked by diseases and sorrows. When its discrimination dawns through God's unmotived grace as the result of the fruition of the effect of virtues, it becomes eager to obtain release from sorrow and suffering and bring itself to the abode of Peace. It then starts for the abode of God's sports, seeks and cultivates Satsanga, and its heart's thirst centred on that desire which remained dormant so long, gets awakened and begins to flow towards God as a strong, irresistible current. Being ever habituated to associate with earthly objects, the impressions of such association troubles it every now and then and

brings it repeated experiences of perplexity and distraction. But through practices of prayer to God, Kirtana, Divine remembrance and Divine thought the heart begins to sweeten, and gradually nearness to God is begun to be felt. Through experience of a little of sweetness the mind rushes into the innermost heart and then God manifests Himself as the guide, or as the boatman who rows the boat to take one across the sea of metempsychosis, or as the Preceptor, who is the very embodiment of Chit or Knowledge. That very moment all sense of deficiency, imperfection and limitation is lost, and pure Bliss and pure Knowledge come within the purview of direct experience.

Gopis, who having perfected their Sadhanā just then, were about to enter the most intimate sports of God, had been ever anxious to unite and merge their being in Śri Kṛṣṇa's being and stood on the very edge of perfection. Again, there were those who though actually perfect were helping the Lord in His sports according to His will. Bhagavān Śri Kṛṣṇa, the only Knower of all the sentiments of their heart, attracted them by the music of His flute and engaged them in spiritual discipline, as if to wash away whatever remnant of old impressions might remain hidden in any distant corner of their heart. How great was His grace! How intense was the Love He returned to His Lovers! The mind feels charmed and fascinated when it comes to realize this.

In the shape of their garments, taking up all their coverings of Saṃskāra (impressions) in His hand, Śri Kṛṣṇa climbed the nearby Kadamba tree and

sat on its branch. The Gopis were in the water; being plunged in the river they regarded themselves, as if, maintaining privacy from all-pervading and all-seeing Bhagavān Śri Kṛṣṇa's view—as if they had forgotten the truth that Śri Kṛṣṇa was present not only in the water itself, but was himself the water as well. Their old Saṃskāras were hindering them from appearing before Śri Kṛṣṇa; they had forgotten everything else for the sake of Śri Kṛṣṇa, but themselves, or their individuality, they had not yet forgotten. They sought Śri Kṛṣṇa alone, but their Saṃskaras wanted to keep the distance of a covering in between. Love does not allow even a soft flower to stand between the Lover and the Beloved. It is the nature of Love to bring about union which is distanceless, obstructionless and eternal. So long as one's all—extended to whatever degree it may be—is not reduced to ashes in the fire of Love, Love and surrender both remain incomplete. Removing this incompleteness, 'immensely pleased with their innocence' (शुद्धभावप्रसादितः), Śri Kṛṣṇa said "O Gopis, who Love Me with a whole heart, forget once the self in you and your all, and come to Me; reveal for a moment the spirit of unmanifest surrender hidden in your heart. Can you not do even this much for My sake?" Imagine the Gopis replying thus,—"O Śri Kṛṣṇa, how shall we forget ourselves? It cannot be possible so long as the past impressions of our innumerable previous lives co-exist with us. We are submerged up to the neck in the unfathomable waters of worldly existence. We are shivering from the cold. Although we seek to

come to you, we cannot do so. O charming Śyāma, the Life of our Life, our heart is open before you. We are Your bond slaves. We shall obey Your order. But please do not summon us to appear before You in a nude state." This state of the spiritual aspirant—seeking God and yet clasping the world to the bosom, and remaining entangled in the world, *i.e.*, clinging to the screen of Māyā, is a state of crucial struggle. The Lord teaches him, "Come, come to Me, leaving off your impressions (individuality), devoid of garments (coverings), putting aside the screen of Māyā. I have myself wrested from you the screen of your ignorance, why are you still attached to it? This screen itself separated the Jīva from God. Now that it is removed, you are truly saved. Come to Me, for then alone the eternal desires of your heart will meet their satisfaction." He in whose innermost heart this call from God, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, this sweet invitation for the union with the soul of one's soul, the dearest object of the heart, reveals itself through God's grace, gets merged in Love and renouncing his all, renouncing, in fact, the very sense of renunciation, runs to sacrifice himself at the altar of Beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet. Then, he will not care for his clothes, or for his environment. He will cease to see the world as well as himself. Herein lies the secret of Divine Love. This is bound to take place in pure, exclusive Divine Love.

The Gopis came and stood silent near Śrī Kṛṣṇa. With bashful face, they kept looking to the ground. Some slight remnant of past Samskāra hindered them from turning their face completely

towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa smiled a little and hinted with a gesture—"In this the greatest form of sacrifice, such shrinking is a blot. You are ever pure. You will have to sacrifice even this—this sense of sacrifice, this remembrance itself of sacrifice." The Gopis' eyes now settled on the lotus of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's face. Automatically their palms joined for offering obeisance, and they begged for Love from their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, dwelling in the sun. This sacrifice of everything, this total surrender, this forgetfulness of self of the highest order filled the Gopis to the brim with Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Love. They began to dive and float in the infinite ocean of Divine Rāsa, of transcendent, supernatural sweetness. They forgot everything, even the forgetting agent. In their view now Śyāmasundara, and Śyāmasundara (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) alone, existed.

When the Love-intoxicated devotee forgets himself, the entire responsibility for his welfare devolves on God. Now, the Gopis needed no clothes for maintaining social convention. For what they had required and sought they attained. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not allow His devotee to fall from social convention. He Himself now returns their clothes to the Gopis and awakens them from forgetfulness through His nectarean speech and brings them back to the world. Śrī Kṛṣṇa said,—'O Gopis, you are chaste and pure. Your Love and spiritual efforts are not unknown to Me. Your desire, your thought will be fulfilled. This thought, this desire of yours elevates you to that state which is attained by those who have transcended all thought and desire. Your object has been gained, your surrender has

been complete. In the forthcoming autumnal nights our sport will attain its culmination. Thus the Lord laid down the date when their spiritual efforts will reach their fruition. This clearly reveals that not the least trace of lust touched Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is never possible for anybody moved by lust to restrain himself in the presence of women in the nude state.

There is another point of special significance. The clothes which before the Gopīs had approached the Lord, acted as hindrance to their complete surrender—acted as the cause of wavering their mind to and fro—were transformed into remnants of worship after they gained the Lord's grace, Love, nearness and blessing. What was the cause of this? The cause was relationship with God. The Lord had picked up the clothes with His own hand and placed them on His shoulder, which was a part of the upper or superior region of the body. Who can imagine how much transcendent Rāsa, and how much purity were derived by these clothes, and how much full of Śrī Kṛṣṇa they became, when they had been placed by God on His shoulder—clothes or Saris which are used for covering the lower part of the body? As a matter of fact, the world is a hindrance, is the cause of distraction, so long as it is not related to God, so long as it is not accepted as the remnant of worship. When God returns it to the devotee, though the cause of bondage, it becomes the same as liberation. When touched by God, Māyā is transformed into pure Vidyā or absolute Knowledge. The world and all its activities become nectarean and full of bliss.

The fear of bondage disappears. No obstruction can obscure the Divine vision. The hell no longer remains hell, for the vision of God being continued, it is transformed into Vaikuṇṭha or the Abode of God. Having attained this state, the greatest of spiritual strivers begin to appear acting like ordinary men of the world. The Gopīs, after they became Śrī Kṛṣṇa's own, now put on those very clothes; or, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa made them put on those clothes; but in the Gopīs' view these were not the same old clothes, and as a matter of fact, they were not the same clothes—for they had now been transformed into wholly different things. Now, they are sanctified Prasāda, remnant of worship of God and beautiful symbols to bring God's memory to mind from moment to moment. That is why the Gopīs accepted them. In their state of Love, they lived beyond social convention, yet because of God's desire they accepted social convention. When the matter is considered from this point of view, it appears that this sport of stealing the Gopīs' garments, like all other sports of the Lord, is a full expression of the highest propriety of conduct.

With regard to the sports of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, those ancient books alone compiled by the Ṛsis are authoritative which contain description of the sports. Among them there is none which does not recognize and describe the divinity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The statement is everywhere found that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was God Himself. Those who do not recognize Śrī Kṛṣṇa as God do not clearly recognize the authoritative character of those books of the scripture. And those

who do not regard them as authoritative lack the qualification to examine and understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa's character on the basis of His sports described in those books. From the scriptural point of view, it is a crime to look upon divine sports as of the same character as human activities, and their imitation by man is wholly prohibited. The human intellect, gross as it is, can function only with relation to matter, it can form no conception of the transcendent sports of God. The intellect which attempts to measure with its own yardstick the supernatural sports of God, the inspirer of the intellect, the Supreme Being existing far beyond the intellect, does nothing but ridicule itself.

Though opposed by both the heart and the intellect, if we assume for a moment that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not God Himself, or that His sports were human in character, yet nothing can be established by the test of reasoning or argument, which can put a stigma on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's character. The student of the *Śrimad Bhāgavata* knows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa stayed in Vraja only up to his eleventh year. If his age at the time of the Rāsa-dance is taken to be ten, the stealing of garments took place in his ninth year. To associate lustful propensity with a child of eight to nine years of age is quite unnatural. It appears beyond conception that rustic cowherd maids untouched by the culture of modern cities should seek to establish illicit connection with a child of nine years and devote themselves to worship for the satisfaction of that desire. To attribute impure motive to those cowherd girls is nothing but a reflex of the

impure condition of the modern mind. What was wrong in those girls to worship the Goddess with the object of gaining extremely charming and extremely sweet Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their husband, even as nowadays small village girls perform worship of gods and goddesses to gain husband alike Śrī Rāma and husband's younger brother alike Lakṣmaṇa ?

The condition prevailing in modern civilized society is different. In countries where the goal of life is enjoyment, pure and simple, clubs have been established for propagating ideas of nudism and naked bath. The view of the people of those countries is confined to satisfaction of the senses. Indian sense of decorum is opposed to such habits, which are both ugly and excitable to the senses. Naked bath is a fault which promotes beastliness. The scriptures prohibit it. 'न नप्तः लायात्' is their injunction. Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not want that there should be anything in the Gopis' conduct which was against the scriptures. Naked bath is not only a social evil, it is against the teachings of the Indian Rsis, who recognize the existence of deities in every object and is hence repugnant to the deities. Śrī Kṛṣṇa knew that the practice involved a direct insult to the deity of water, Varuṇa. In gaining the object for which the Gopis had been performing their austerities, their naked bath tended to produce the contrary effect, and the practice might extend, if it was not nipped in the bud. Therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa prohibited it in a unique manner.

Again Śrī Kṛṣṇa adopted this original method in order to impress on the mind of the rustic cowherd maids

the evil involved in this practice. If instead of this, He had lectured the Gopis on the philosophy underlying the belief in the existence of Devas, being unlettered and uncultured, they would have failed to understand it. What was required here was to make them realize the immediate loss which threatened them because of this evil practice. After this was brought home to them, the insult they cast on the Devas was mentioned, and they were made to atone for the guilt by seeking pardon with joined palms. Great souls exhibit their genius even in their childhood.

Arguments such as, 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa being a child of eight or nine years of age, lustful propensity was impossible in Him at that age', 'He stole the Gopis' garments in order to uproot the practice of naked bath', though appearing somewhat satisfactory to some people, they get startled when they come across words like 'Kāma' (desire) and 'Ramaṇa' (amorous sport) in the original text. These are nothing but play on words to which great spiritual souls do not care to bestow any attention. Words like 'Kāma' 'Ramaṇa' 'Rati' etc., appear frequently in the Śrutis and even in the *Gitā*; but there they do not convey any vulgar meaning. The *Gitā* describes 'Kāma' not inconsistent with virtue (धर्मविरुद्ध कामः) as the same as God. 'Dalliance with Self' (अत्मरमण), 'Union with Self' (अत्मसम्युक्त), 'Delight in the Self' (अत्मरति) of self-realized souls is well-known to all. Under the circumstance, thoughtful men should not get startled at the mere sight of certain words. Those who regard Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a mere human being should understand the meaning of 'Ramaṇa' and 'Rati' as mere play or sport, which is quite correct according to the grammatical aphorism 'एष कीदृशाश्'.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sports appear differently to different persons, according to the differences in their outlook. Those who treat them as spiritual allegory look upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Ātmā, and the Gopis as the different faculties of the mind. From this point of view, loss of covering of the faculties is the same as 'stealing of garments' and their union with, and submergence in, the Ātmā is the same as 'Rāsa'. All the sports can be successfully explained from this allegorical standpoint. According to followers of the devotional school, they represent the transcendent sports of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Goloka, the fullest manifestation of God, and continue from eternity to eternity. Out of compassion for His devotees, the Lord occasionally comes down with His eternal abode and eternal companions and enact these sports on earth and then disappears leaving their stories for the remembrance and meditation of devotees and giving them the taste of pure spiritual joy. How the Lord washes the dirt hidden in the innermost core of the heart of spiritual aspirants and purifies the film of the mind storing impressions of life-experiences of innumerable births is also made clear from this sport of 'Stealing of Garments'. God's sports are all mysterious, the Lord Himself knows the total truth behind them, and only partially they are known to fortunate devotees who have earned the privilege of entering and participating in the sports through God's grace. What has been written here is based only on the scriptures and the sayings of saints, and the writer craves the indulgence of the reader for the presumptuousness shown in dealing with a subject of such transcendent character.

(*Kalyan*)

The Lord of Life

BY F. HOMER CURTISS, B. S., M. D.

"Come forth, O Lord of Life and Love and Beauty ! Thou who art my Higher Self and yet art God ! And manifest through this body of Thine, that it may out-picture Thy radiant perfection, all that Thou art within. Even so manifest through me, O Lord. Amen." *Prayers of the O. C. M.*, Curtiss, 40.

O Thou mighty Lord of Life ! Give us a more conscious realization of our life in Thee ! Pour Thy Divine Life-force into each one of us that we may transcend the limitations of the flesh and radiate Thy spiritual Life-force to bless all we contact.

One of the main objects of your life while here on earth is to manifest through your body of flesh the spiritual currents of the Lord of Life who is the great Source of all life. This can be done consciously only to the extent that you realize the Spiritual Self who dwells within you.

BLIND SEEKERS

Scientists, psychologists, philosophers and other seekers for Truth often go around and around in a blind search to find Truth or God, or at least some proof of His existence. If they search in the heavens, if they search in the earth or in the depths of the sea, they often fail to recognize Him in those outer manifestations. This is because they do not recognize Him first in their own hearts. For only as each heart

responds to His presence within can it respond to His presence without, or allow Him to manifest through it.

But, in spite of this common lack of response to His indwelling presence, and in spite of the difficulties so many place in the way of His manifestation, they often have marvellous experiences for which they cannot account. Some say: "These things are outside my experience and my understanding of Life. Yet there must be something there, some cause, some great Truth which I should understand. Tell me more about it."

THE LAW

We have said elsewhere that the word "Lord" is often used as synonymous with "Law". But it means far more than law. A law is but the usual mode or manner of expression of some force. But the Lord of Life is far more than the manifestation of a force, even the Divine Life-force. The Lord of Life is an infinite and glorious Celestial Being who is the Law. For He is both the Maker and the Manifestor of the Law. For it is the manner in which His radiations invariably go forth which constitutes the Law.

Hence the natural modes of His expression in each world of manifestation establishes the laws of each world. Thus we realize the oneness of the tiniest unit of life with the divine One Life of the great Cosmic Lord of Life as

it pulsates, however infinitesimally, in His smallest form of life. In this way He informs and animates and rules all living things by law through the warmth and radiance of His outshining.

THE UNKNOWABLE

Some give to this One Life which animates all living forms the name of the Infinite or the Unknowable, the Supreme Being or God. Yet the great aim of our existence is to know this Unknowable and manifest as much of the Infinite as possible through the finite personality. The object of all our striving is, therefore, to reach up to and respond to the consciousness of the Lord of Life that He may become the law of our life. Since "everything that hath life hath law", it must also have a Law-giver, an aspect of the Lord of Life, dwelling within it as its integrating, cohering principle, its consciousness or soul. And according to the nature of the form will be its grade of consciousness; its expression of Divinity.

For all life and consciousness are limited by the vehicle through which they find expression. Hence, it is the great privilege of man, as the most highly evolved form in creation—he who is sent to Earth to "do the will of the Father on Earth, even as it is done in heaven"—to recognize and correlate with the Lord of Life in all kingdoms and worlds. Only thus will he realize where he stands in the scheme of things.

THE DIVINE LIFE-FORCE

As you respond to the uprush of the Divine Life-force as revealed in the beauties of Spring, all your senses are

delighted and you are made glad. In the presence of a glorious landscape, before a towering mountain, in a mighty forest, your heart is touched and you experience a great thrill of happiness. You stand breathless in awe and wonder at the grandeur and beauty of it all. And you marvel how your insignificant personal self, this pigmy amidst the grandeur of Nature, can have such a thrilling reaction.

This is because for the moment the manifestation of the Lord of Life in you has touched the heart of Nature and you have had some realization of your oneness with the Lord of Life in Nature. And the immensity of that life has overwhelmed you. For the moment you have risen above the vibrations of the outer life and have let the inner life flow through you. You have awakened from your spiritual slumber and have felt something of your oneness with the Lord of Life. Thus, your reaction in oneness of response has proved that the Lord of Life is within you as well as in Nature, for it is His One Life that animates you as well as all other life forms. You have touched the cosmic live-wire or life-wire; the living power, the divine consciousness, that has brought the entire universe into manifestation.

MORE THAN MORTAL

If you will let your mind dwell on this thought, you will soon learn to think of yourself not as a limited human personality, not even as a mere mortal, but as a Spiritual Being animated by all the divine powers of the Lord of Life. And if the Lord of Life can manifest so beautifully in all the kingdoms

of Nature which you see so lavishly displayed around you, so can He manifest just as beautifully through you *if you will but let Him.*

But the beauties of Nature are manifested according to law. For, we repeat, everything that has life has law, the law of its being. And it must live according to that law or its flow of life-force from the Lord of Life will be interfered with and ultimately will cease entirely. Then that form will die. This law of use-or-else atrophy applies to you. Unless you correlate with and use the spiritual forces from the Lord of Life your spiritual as well as your physical life will die out.

BLOCKING THE CHANNELS

Since the Lord of Life manifests fully only in rhythmic harmony, your aches and pains, your illness and diseases, your tempers and passions, manifest because you do not recognize and follow the guidance of the Lord of Life within as obediently as do the other forms of life in Nature. If inharmony is manifesting through you, in some way you are blocking the channels for His harmonious expression because you are interfering with the manifestation of His law in your life. Seek diligently therefore within your consciousness and your life and daily habits for the causes of the inharmony of body, mind and Spirit, and correct them, if you wish perfect harmony and happiness to manifest in your life.

VARIOUS CHANNELS

Elsewhere* we have pointed out in detail how you block the manifestation

of the Lord of Life through your body by blocking the physical channels. This you do by neglecting to keep open and clear the channels by which the body wastes are eliminated. Hence, your body reacts to the destructive vibrations of the worn-out waste products and their toxines which predominate instead of the vibrations of the life, health and vigour of the Lord of Life.

But in addition to cleanliness and harmony of body there must be cleanliness and harmony of mind as well. For just as bodily impurities interfere with the proper flow of the vitalizing and regenerative stream of vitality, health and strength to all the bodily organs and tissues, just so do mental and emotional inharmonies interfere with the flow of the streams of happiness, illumination and regeneration from the Lord of Life.

Therefore, just as you need to purge your body from its accumulated wastes, so must you purge your mind and emotions from their accumulated inharmonies. This is accomplished by allowing the great stream of Divine Life-force to flow forth so freely through you from the Lord of Life that it will cleanse you from all inharmonies and fill you with peace, harmony and the joy of living.

THE PROCEDURE

To accomplish this you must deliberately practise contacting the Lord of Life within. Sit quietly and relax all tension of body, one part after the other. Then relax all tension of mind and let the stream of thoughts concerning the outer world—especially all anxiety and fear about war conditions—slow up

* See *Four-Fold Health*, Curtiss.

and gradually die down into perfect calm and peace. Thus you consciously divert your attention from all forms of inharmony. Repeat some such prayer as our *Morning Prayer** and focus your attention in contemplation of the Lord of Life. Meditate on Him *until you feel a response* to His love and power. *Feel* the blood flowing everywhere throughout your body. *Feel it* dissipating every congestion in every part where there may be trouble. *Feel it* relieving the pressure and therefore soothing any inflamed tissue, quieting any pain and vitalizing your whole body.

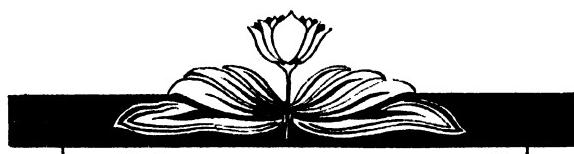
Then, if you have any worries or mental problems say: "The Lord of Life fills me with His peace and guides me with His wisdom. He frees me from all mental confusion and uncertainty." Then *feel* His currents of peace and harmony flow in and wash out all worries, all fears, all grudges and resentments you may have been holding against others, all envy and jealousy. *Feel* a sense of utter peace and sweet harmony flow in to take complete possession of you. Do not merely read about this here, but *stop now and meditate upon it until you feel it*. When this inflow is felt and its peace is established within, then ask that the

solutions to your problems be impressed upon or revealed to you.

TIME IS REQUIRED

Do not be impatient. Take plenty of time for your response to come through, just as you take plenty of time to warm up your motor. Remember that it takes time for eggs to hatch and buds to open. Allow your mind to respond to the inflow of His consciousness and respond to His guidance. Then you will see how simple the solution really is, *providing you are willing* to give up your preconceived ideas and carry out the solution given you. But if you are humble and are willing to obey the directions that come to you, you will also be given the courage, strength and soul-power to carry them out.

But you must ask the Lord of Life to guide your thoughts and illumine your understanding, lest you fail to grasp His instructions. Thus will you allow the Lord of Life and Love and Beauty to manifest through you unimpeded in radiant health, in useful and successful activities, and in happiness and blessing to yourself and all you contact. For remember that you are influencing one way or another all you meet or contact. Which way shall that influence be ?†



* *Prayers of the O. O. M.*, Curtiss, 3.

† Reprinted from Teachings of the Universal Religious Fellowship, 5130 Connecticut Ave., Washington, D. C.

When Freedom is Self-Evident

BY SĀDHU EKARASA

The mountaintop is hidden in the clouds of night,
The lake is veiled by bluish morning mists,
The soles of my bare feet are kissing lustfully the dust
Of the sandy road around the sacred mountain of the God
At the foot of which I live and pray and contemplate
(In truth all one, though in three words expressed),
There's darkness, silence, and solemnity.

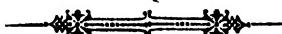
One ray of sunlight, and God's blessings change
In nature, soon to fill the world with sunny laughter.

It's free I am ! Who ever told me that I am not free ?
That was the greatest lie that I was ever told.
It's all the world continually proclaiming it
Behind our back, not ever right aloud and openly !

There's freedom in the darkness of the night
And freedom in the glorious light of day;
And "all the world" is auto-hypnotized,
With satisfaction self-deluded, and consequently
Securely self-bound by well-imagined chains !

A glance at the mountaintop, a footbath in an ancient tank,
Hands folded in the Shrine of Ṛṣi Gautama,
The heart intent upon the blessed form of God, the Mountain-Light
To the chosen Guru all-surrendered, without the least reserve
Say, what base is there to ignorance, to sin ?
What truth is there in bondage, O my friend ?

When freedom is self-evident, and even "liberation"
Seems a word tinged with bondage-thoughts,
There is but what there is, life with the sun,
The moon, the stars, on a pure blessed earth;
And even "freedom" ceases to mean anything
Once it has been really experienced as the truth.
Stop talking, Ekarasa, there's nothing to be said !



The All-Pervading Indwelling Spirit

BY SRIDHAR MAJUMDAR, M. A.

"The seers of the Upaniṣads by dint of meditation saw, as the cause, Brahma's energy concealed in His own nature; He alone regulates all the causes including time and ego." (*Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* I. 3) They declare unequivocably to the people of the world in their trumpet-voice—"I know this Supreme Being, shining like the sun and existing behind the phenomenon; it is only by realizing Him that people attain immortality; there is no other way to escape from this mortal world." (*Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* III. 8) Other Upaniṣads are also independently echoing the same view; the one all-pervading, indwelling spirit is spoken of as the sole cause in every Upaniṣad. "As one fire entering the entire world remains hidden in every form of every object, so the one Inner Self of all the movable and immovable takes every form of every object and is also beyond them all. As one air entering the entire world takes every form of every object, so the one Inner Self of all the movable and the immovable, takes every form of every object and is also beyond them all. (The doubt that the Universal Self being one with all the different individuals may incur the sorrows and sufferings of the latter is removed by the following couplet). As the sun, the eye of the whole world, is unattached to un-holy external objects visible to the eye, so the one Inner Self of all the movable and immovable does not mix up with the sorrows of the world; He is of

indifferent habit. There is one Ruler, the Inner-Self of all the movable and the immovable who manifests His one form in various ways; none but the tranquil persons who perceive Him within, obtain everlasting bliss." (*Kaṭhopaniṣad* II. ii. 9-12)

"O mind, remember that this life is one with the eternal Divine Life, whereas this body is transient and terminable to ashes; think in the name of the Almighty, Om, over and over again, of your duty to be done; that is, be always conscious of your existence in the eternal Spirit Infinite, forgetting completely, at the same time, the idea of the transient body."

(*Iśopaniṣad* 17)

"Verily the self is to be seen, i.e., intuited, to be heard, to be thought of and continually to be concentrated upon. O Maitreyi, by seeing, hearing and meditating of and concentrating on Self, everything of this universe becomes known."

(Instruction of Yāñavalkya to his wife Maitreyi *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* II. iv. 5)

From the Śruti it is known that the Self is one Supreme Being, the realization of whom is the *summum bonum* of life. He is the Supreme Ruler of all, entered into all hearts, Governor of all individuals, Lord of all; we want to know that person, Who is alluded to in all the Upaniṣads, Whom all the Vedas refer to.

Yama instructs Nachiketā, saying "Whom all the Vedas proclaim, Whom all religious practices aim at, seeing Whom people observe abstinence from sexual appetite, of Him I speak to thee briefly; Him we call 'Om' (Dialogue between Yama and Nachiketā: *Kaṭhopaniṣad*. I. ii. 15)

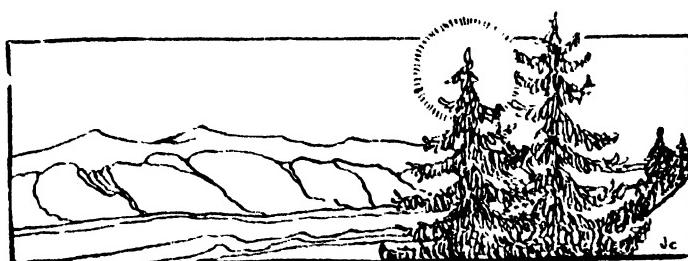
"This Bhumā, Ātman, the Self and nothing else is in the bottom as well as in the top; the Self is in the back as well as in the front, the Self is in the right as well as in the left; everything of this world, internal and external, is the Self. He who sees in this way, minds in this way and perceives in this way, amuses in the Self and enjoys bliss in the Self, he becomes absolute, he exercises his free will in all the worlds."

(Instruction of Sanatkumāra to Nārada—*Chhāndogyopaniṣad* VII. xxv. 2)

This all-pervading indwelling Self is to be intuited over and over again. "Know this non-dual Self alone in whom the heaven, the earth, the sky and the mind, with all the vital airs remain even as one; give up entirely all other words; He is the bridge of immortality. (*Mundakopaniṣad* II. ii. 5) He is with-

in and outside all the movable as well as the immovable; He is all the movable as well as the immovable; He being subtle is incomprehensible. He is near as well as far away." (*Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* XIII. 15)

This eternal Reality is constantly to be cogitated upon. The seers of the Upaniṣads declare with one voice—"It is our firm conviction that one undoubtedly attains immortality by realizing the eternal Reality in every act of cognition." The world-teacher Śrī Kṛṣṇa advises his beloved disciple Arjuna, "Well, the descendant of King Bharata, take refuge in the Self, the Inner Reality, in every way; by His grace than shalt attain supreme peace and eternal abode of perpetual bliss. Pay thy full attention to, with thy mind quite lost in Me, the Self, the Spirit Infinite; be devoted to Me, the Self, worship Me, the Self, bow down to Me, the Self; so doing thou shalt undoubtedly attain Me, the Self; truly do I, the Self, so promise unto thee; as thou art dear to Me, the Self. Giving up all the religious practices take refuge in non-dual Me, the Self alone, I, the Self, will emancipate thee from all sins; lament not." (*Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* XVIII. 62, 65, 66)



The Ladder of Realization

By R. KRISHNASWAMI IYER

1. THE DESCENT

The Vedānta tells us that if God is to be conceived of as really great (Brahma) in the absolute sense of that word, there is no room for the conception of the individual soul or of the world as realities existing independently of Him. If they did so exist, the greatness of God will be circumscribed to that extent and God cannot be absolutely great. It therefore wants us to equate the individual soul and the world with God and assures us that this can be easily done if we only evaluate the former two by ceasing to attach any value to their form-side. The need to go to another place arises from the fact that at present you are not there; it is not only that, you are at present in a place where you do not want to remain. The need to eat arises from the fact that at present you have not eaten; it is not only that, you are at present hungry. The need to sit arises from the fact that at present you are not sitting; it is not only that, you are standing and feel it irksome. The need to know arises from the fact that at present you do not know; it is not only that, you know mistakenly and find it troublesome. Thus generally the need to do something arises when at present you are not doing that something and you are doing some other thing inconsistent with that thing and feel it undesirable. Similarly, the need to equate the world or the individual soul with God arises from the fact that at present we are not so equating

either of them with God, added to the further fact that at present we are equating them with something else and feel that mistaken equating undesirable. If most of us do not interest ourselves in the search for truth or if they pooh-pooh the honest efforts of earnest seekers, it is solely due to the fact that they lack the last element mentioned above, namely, a sense of dissatisfaction with the present state of things.

The mere negative non-equating of the individual soul or the world with God is called by the Vedāntī Āvaraṇa (Screening) or Ajñāna (Non-Perception). The positive equating with something else is called Viķsepa (Distraction) or Āropa (Superimposition). The irksomeness or trouble that we are experiencing or bound to experience by reason of the above mentioned mistakes, both negative and positive, is given the name of Mala (Dirt). These three, the non-equating with God, the equating with something else and the consequent trouble, form a series of successive steps in the descent, as it were, from God to the world or the individual soul.

2. THE ASCENT

As Śrī Śankarāchārya pertinently points out, a person who descends a flight of steps does not ascend the steps in the same order but only in the reverse order. Accordingly, the Dirt has to be first gradually and steadily minimized, Distraction then slowly and

surely got rid of, then Non-Perception overcome, before the great equation can be realized in all its fullness. The Dirt is reduced by the process known as Karma (Action), Distraction eliminated by the process called Bhakti (Devotion) and Non-Perception dissipated by Jñāna (Knowledge). The resultant realization of the equation for ever more is given the name of Mokṣa (Freedom).

Such are the steps in the ladder of ascent towards God. There are some people who are of opinion that Right Action alone is sufficient to secure us salvation, some others that Devotion by itself will amply do, some others that Knowledge without Action or Devotion is quite enough. But the Advaiti emphasizes the equal necessity and importance of everyone of these and points out that they are not distinct paths to salvation but they all together form a single and the only path to it. Each is as important as the other, for none of them is really efficient to take us on to the goal without the help of the others. His method of exposition therefore is not confined to the nature and the function of Knowledge as some merely abstract philosophical systems are, or to the details and the efficacy of Action as ritualistic creeds confine themselves to, or to the method of worship and the ecstatic enjoyment with which devotional faiths are content to deal with. His is a wider and more comprehensive system, in fact a synthesis which holds together, explains and justifies all other systems.

3. A COMMON MISTAKE

It is impossible to jump from the lowest rung of the ladder to the highest. If we attempt to do so even on the physical plane, we shall not only not reach the highest step but lose our hold even of the step on which we are at present and perhaps break our knee as

well. It is no doubt true that the ladder is of no use to the one who has ascended all the rungs and has secured a strong foothold on the terrace above; but he will be a foolish man if he attempts to discard it when he is just trying to ascend a single step or even when he is on any step be it ever so high, short of the terrace itself. Simply because a man has managed to ascend four rungs and stepped on the fifth, he ought not attempt the sawing away of the portion of the ladder which is below him and contains only the four rungs which he has already ascended. If he is foolish enough to do it, he will be mercilessly precipitated to the floor and be seriously injured and it will take some time more for him to capacitate himself once again to seek a ladder and to ascend it. The downfall of many a modern Jñāna-yogī, an aspirant in the rung of Knowledge, is mainly attributable to his wanton and foolish neglect of Action and Devotion which he considered "beneath" him and therefore unnecessary for one of his spiritual eminence.

As already pointed out, Action, Devotion and Knowledge form the rungs of a single ladder and it will be foolish to attempt to do away with it piecemeal. As long as there is embodiment, Action is bound to be, so says Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*Gitā* XVIII. 11). As long as there is dependence ever so slight, Devotion has to be. As long as we do not realize and feel and enjoy the presence of God in and around us, the practice of Jñāna is a necessity. When the perfect equation of the aspirant's soul with God is realized in its fullest significance, the need for any further practice in Jñāna ceases to be; when the soul is so equated with the Supreme Being, there can possibly be no feeling of any the slightest dependence and devotion has no further purpose to

serve; when the soul again is so equated with the Formless Absolute, the seeming embodiment ceases to have any relationship with that soul and can no more land him in any responsible Action. Till such a state of realization is reached, the entire ladder must remain and must be used as necessity may arise.

After such a state is reached, the aspirant who has now ceased to be an aspirant will be immersed, as it were, in the realization of his True Self and will not spare a moment's thought on questions like whether the ladder should be retained thereafter or whether it has to be kicked off. As the need for any effort has ceased for him, he will make no effort for the retention of the ladder and he will equally make no effort for

kicking it off. A sleeping child makes no effort to hold tight the apple in its hand; it equally makes no effort to throw it away. The child simply forgets it. The holding it tight or the allowing it to slip away is not any responsible action of the child but is the result of habit or of reflex action of the inert physical frame. Even such is the real state of the true knower of the self. If anybody tells us that he is a knower and has therefore kicked off Karma and Bhakti and has no more to study or to learn, we may rest assured that he is not a knower and is not at all "sleeping in the Lord", but is quite awake to the world and its attractions especially to that which goes by the name of Fame.

Realization of God-II

(Continued from the previous number)

BY L. KANSHI RAM CHAWLA

There is a school of thought, which believes that realization of God is impossible without Renunciation renouncing the world. The people holding that view consider that so long as a man remains at home, amidst his family and worldly surroundings, he cannot expect to reach the destination. They think that in domestic life his attention remains divided and cannot be concentrated upon God.

There may be a little truth in it but this is not altogether a conclusive principle. It may be that some souls become so much devoted to the Blessed Lord that they cannot afford to spare even a single moment to turn to worldly things. Every minute diverted from that side is considered by them as having been lost. They cannot bear to lose sight of the

Divine vision even for an instant. Such people can by all means act as their inner urge dictates them. But to say that no one can visualize the Divine Light without giving up his worldly connections is a wrong belief.

There have been apostles, sages, nay even incarnations, who were blessed in their domestic lives. It all depends on the state of one's mind. An ascetic thinking of worldly things can derive little gain from his austerities, while a householder can achieve success by leading an honest life of self-control and self-purification.

A worldly man enjoys certain advantages over a recluse. He earns his livelihood by the sweat of his brow, and does not depend on the charity of others. He finds ample occasions to test his self-

control and can soon detect and locate his weak points. He has numerous chances of rendering service and doing good to his fellow beings.

It is nothing extraordinary, if a hermit, living in a secluded place, remains calm, because he gets no opportunities of being agitated and disturbed while a worldly man finds excitements and provocations at every step. If a worldly man can remain calm under all these circumstances his conduct is much more praiseworthy.

This does not mean any kind of censure on asceticism. True Sannyāsis deserve our greatest regard and respect. At the same time it must be recognized that a worldly man who observes faithfully the laws of spirituality, is as good as an ascetic.

We need not enter a convent or become an ascetic in order to escape the embarrassments of domestic life. We must consider life as an adventure and be prepared for all its trials. The renunciation of ordinary work-a-day activities is neither necessary nor advisable, nay it is not even possible. Busy home life is no obstruction to self-realization. It is the culture and refinement of mind that are needed more than the renunciation of worldly activities. The external detachment and renunciation are of little avail, if low cravings and mean desires cling to the mind and haunt one's self.

It is this inner detachment which is essential. An aspirant can acquire it better while fulfilling the ordinary duties of life than by going off to dwell in caves and jungles. What is really required is this. When life brings seemingly pleasant experiences to him, he should check his natural tendency to rush out and embrace them or to cling to them desperately. On the other hand, when painful experiences fall to his lot, he must check the tendency to shrink from them in fear. Constant practice in this manner will carry him a step up on the

ladder which leads to the Goal. With each success, however partial and small, he will find himself nearer to that complete freedom from all sense of pleasure and pain, which constitutes the crown of renunciation, and is the habitual attitude of him who has attained the Supreme Bliss.

They who advocate renunciation also ask us to believe that *Is the world an illusion?* This world is unreal. It is a show. It is visible to us in the same way as we see things in a dream. They say that pain and pleasure have no reality, but are a delusion only. This is an erroneous view. If the world is not a reality, the men belonging to this school of thought have also no existence and their talk is also of no consequence. Everything must be taken as imaginary and unreal. What is the value of the unreal talk of unreal men in this unreal world. There is no use to listen to it at all.

True, it is a folly to become attached to this world, and to think that this will remain with us indefinitely and thus forget and remain away from the real object of our life. But it is also far from reasonable to deny the existence of this world.

The world is not an illusion. You and I and all the other innumerable living beings cannot be resolved by a logical quibble into a perfect zero. This misconception generally prevails among superficial students of the problem so that they totally deny the existence of this world. The question is very naturally put.

"If all this be unreal, why should it have been created?"

The Truth is that the world is real, and eternal, but that its reality and eternity are only relative. Just as the colour of the rose is perfectly real, but all the same it is not in the flower itself. Similarly the limitations of name and form, or space, time and causality are not in the world itself. Things are not what

they seem, is an eternal verity. It is as true of the entire world as it is of the rose.

Our perception or rather the perception of all created things has an inherent power to distort and colour up things it comes into contact with. What exists is only a boundless, eternal and all-pervading consciousness, by the side of which the world is a relative reality, just as by the side of the rose, as it really is, the colour and scent, etc., are only relatively real. We cannot say that our dreams are unreal, unless we are in the waking state. Similarly we cannot call the world unreal, unless we do so with reference to the changeless, universal reality.

The world then is just like a dream, rather a long dream. It is not however absolutely unreal but is soonly relatively. To ordinary men, who have not realized the absolute Reality, it is practically a complete reality, just as a dream is to the man who is dreaming. For those blessed souls who have fully realized the Divinity in the self within,—the world has no value. But that does not mean that the world vanishes from their sight altogether. To them it is an appearance which can no longer deceive, a dream from which they have awokened. However they still vividly remember the mirage which has been discovered to be such. Those blessed souls soar in higher altitudes and the delusions and deceptions of this world cannot entrap them. They become aware of the real value of the world as compared with the Absolute Reality.

Now we have to see what qualities are necessary for those who are in search of God. It is true that all are entitled to tread this path, but as it is necessary for a traveller to have strong legs or some reliable conveyance and some provisions for the journey, so it is necessary for a devotee

*Requisites of
seekers after
truth*

to possess certain attributes, which would help him in his march to the goal of Bliss. The following are some of the noble qualities which one is required to possess and cultivate:—

Non-violence, truth, purity, compassion, love, charity, forgiveness, self-control, self-sacrifice, love of solitude, tenderness of heart, straightforwardness, humility, spirit of service, tolerance, respect for other faiths and creeds, absence of hatred, equanimity, desirelessness, contentment, appreciation of other's merits, benevolence, absence of attachment and egoism, aversion to honour and praise, an eye to see public good and above all reliance on God. One should go on developing such virtues of mind, speech and body constantly with vigilance and perseverance. In this way one will not only be blessed himself but also help countless other souls in that direction.

Mind is the centre of all activities. All ideas, all thoughts, all schemes and plans originate in the mind. This universe is the result of a mere wish of the Creator. All man-made things, including numerous inventions, took shape after an idea had occurred of them to some human brain. We cannot accomplish any task without planning it with the help of the mind. On the spiritual side also the help of the mind is of the utmost importance. The qualities which are requisite for the traveller on the spiritual path and which have been detailed above cannot be acquired unless the mind is under control.

In the Upanisads the body has been compared to a chariot drawn by the horses of senses with the bridle of mind and intellect as the charioteer. The soul is likened to the master of the chariot who is seated inside. The destination can be reached and the chariot and its master can remain safe only if the horses are fully trained and controlled by a

*Control over
mind and
senses*

strong bridle. This shows the importance of mind in the race of life.

Cultivating one's physical powers and breath-control, studying the scriptures, counting beads and worshipping gods, saying prayers or fulfilling austere vows and practising austerities, are only means to the end. If they do not render the mind tranquil, they will merely swell our pride. Tranquillity of the mind is a prime necessity.

There is no one particular method of bringing the mind under subjection. However, self-denial is the basis of all such methods. Whenever we can suppress a craving or a desire, which relates to the senses, we have gone a step forward on this path. Reciting name of God, meditation, keeping the mind busy, fixing it on a particular point, inducing it to shun at all times the evil sights, objectionable scenes and sinful places and persuading it always to seek the company of the virtuous people, pondering over the consequences of evil deeds and thoughts—all these go a long way to help one in subduing this most restless thing in the world.

Attempts should be made to withdraw it from the pursuit of worldly objects and attach it to God, either with the help of one of these or any other method that may appeal itself to the reader. However it is an admitted truth that no progress is possible without control of the mind. Just as a reflection gets distorted in tremulous water, even so the self is not properly reflected in a restless mind. But we get a clear reflection of any object in water which is calm and still. Even so the true form of the self can be directly perceived by a mind which is still and calm. Let us try our best with all the strength and energy at our command to attain this state of tranquillity of mind. He who has attained calmness of mind is sure to make his life happy through a sight of that Effulgent Being who is all Bliss.

The mind can be set at rest by reducing our wants and leading a simple life. If the desires are cut down, and the wants reduced to the barest minimum then the mind is automatically controlled.

Says Jortin :

"The art of governing our passions is more useful and more important than many things in the search and pursuit of which we spend our days. Without this art, riches and health, skill and knowledge, will give us little satisfaction and whatever else we be, we can be neither happy, nor wise, nor good."

Whenever our meditation is interrupted, we should try to control our mind and feel the presence of the Lord in the very midst of interruption. We must not be impatient. The mind requires constant hammering and patting. It should not be treated with too much harshness and rigidity nor with too much softness and leniency. It should be brought under proper sway and subjected to discipline. sometimes by persuasion, sometimes by admonition, sometimes by love and sometimes by severity as the occasion demands. Hurry and haste will spoil the game. Progress may be slow, but it should be steady. Efforts should be continuous, zealous and incessant.

By and by the mind will give up the futile search and will cease to project itself into the external world. But the cessation of this function does not mean total subjugation. There is an ultimate substratum of consciousness behind the mind. As is daily seen in sound (dreamless) sleep, when the mind is at rest, this consciousness is always present. It is permanent.

When the search after external things is found not worth-while, the mind is laid aside and the consciousness behind it lives by itself, it does not want to know anything outside, nor does it want anything at all. In other words, it is all permanence, knowledge and bliss.

The mind and the senses are interconnected, and inter-dependent, senses cannot function without the aid of the mind and mind cannot accomplish its desires without the active help of the senses. One can push the other into the correct or the wrong direction. Efforts should, therefore, be made to control both the mind and the senses. Greater attention should be paid to the former which is the more active of the two. Senses also play no minor part and therefore need sufficient attention. They sometimes carry the mind with them. The senses of sight, touch, taste and others all need our attention. A little negligence in this respect may prove very harmful.

We are miserably steeped in ignorance and at every step are liable to be led astray by those traitors in the rebel camp. It has been said in the scriptures:

"The five creatures the deer, the elephant, the moth, the fish and the bumble bee come to grief in gratifying a single sense, viz., sound, touch, sight, taste and smell respectively. Then how much worse must be the lot of man, who has all the five senses to gratify?"

The most important thing on this path is purity of life. So long as the mirror of the heart is covered with dust and dirt, it cannot reflect the light of Wisdom. Every seeker after truth has to purge himself of all impurities—lust, anger, greed, etc. No doubt the battle is very hard, but it has got to be fought. The passions become strongest and most alluring just on the eve of the flight. But the very determination to attain the light dispels even the strongest army of passions. When one is pure in heart, one becomes a repository of Light.

"The pure heart of him, who has affirmed himself in full consciousness, is transformed into a mental sky with its own sun, moon and stars. Such a pure heart becomes a spectacle of the inconceivable God

through the mysterious vision and exaltation of mind."

Even in worldly affairs one meets

Obstacles in the way of realization

with innumerable obstacles and hindrances, and those have to be overcome otherwise success cannot be attained in any undertaking whatsoever. Similarly there are numerous obstructions to be faced in matters spiritual also. The chief difficulties in this way are:—

1. Indifferent health.
2. Immoderation in diet.
3. Want of continence.
4. Too much reasoning and discussion (Sophistry).
5. Scepticism.
6. Want of regularity and continuity.
7. Bigotry and hatred.
8. Finding fault with others and self-praise.
9. Undesirable company.
10. Love of publicity.
11. Contentment with partial success in this undertaking.
12. Want of a true guide.

One must be careful to avoid these pitfalls. The first and foremost consideration is to be mindful of one's health. If one's health is impaired, progress is instantly checked. "A sound mind in a sound body" is an absolute truth.

Regularity and moderation in diet are most essential for physical fitness. Want of abstinence arrests one's spiritual progress in no time. Whatever practice one starts under the guidance of a true preceptor, it must be carried on with the utmost regularity. It is then only that happy results can be anticipated. Hatred and aversion act as a dam in this way and impede spiritual advancement.

Other obstacles which stand in the way of one's onward march to this goal are jealousy, enmity, hypocrisy, censor-

ousness and malice—these are great enemies in the domain of spiritual culture. A seeker after truth should always try to keep himself free from these evils.

One should never aspire to be a preacher, lecturer, reformer, preceptor, guide or leader. He should try to saturate his life with truth, love, compassion, knowledge and devotion, and continue to develop the spirit of self-denial and detachment. The more one develops these virtues, the more will the qualities of truth, love, etc., manifest themselves in his life.

Luxury, vice, lethargy, carelessness, doubt, bigotry, wrangling, sophistry, pride of knowledge, loquacity, excessive social contacts, desire for honour and applause, these are great hindrances in the path of spiritual discipline. The aspirant should always scrupulously guard himself against these evils.

Lust, anger, greed, malice, violence, jealousy, pride, self-consciousness, and other such vices are very strong, indeed. One should therefore try to eradicate them by all means. Through the company of holy men and proper spiritual practices one may occasionally feel oneself cured of these evils and thereby regard himself as having attained the stage of spiritual perfection, but as a matter of fact, the complete eradication of these evils is extremely difficult. They may be temporarily brought under control or suppressed, but all the same they remain hidden in the sub-conscious mind in the form of suppressed desires, which, through circumstances favourable to their development, or in the presence of exciting stimuli, reappear as thoroughly awakened impulses. That is why these evils occasionally make their appearance even in men, who are generally held to be absolutely pure and self-possessed.

Therefore guarding against pride and arming oneself with the Divine grace, one should try with the utmost care to root

out these evils. When these impulses do not awaken even in the presence of the strongest temptations, then one may take that they are on the way to extinction.

At times it is found that these impulses do not awaken when one puts oneself to a deliberate test, but are aroused on the sudden and unexpected appearance of an exciting cause. When they do not reappear even in such circumstances and not even in a dream then alone one should imagine that the process of their complete extinction is in progress.

One should not get puffed up if some
meritorious act happens to be
Pride performed through his agency.

One should feel grateful to God for the success and attribute it solely to His help and grace. Pride is a great stumbling block in the way of spiritual success. As soon as pride makes its appearance, success begins to recede, and the abnormal growth of pride proves fatal indeed.

By expressing one's gratitude to God for every success and clinging to His blessed feet more and more, till the state of total dependence on Him is reached, one attains that supreme success, through which the object of his life is realized once for all.

As for the significance of the eradication of pride and vanity a couple of instances would be in point. The battle of Kuruksetra was over.

Yudhiṣṭhīra then said:—

"Oh Kṛṣṇa, all our enemies have no doubt perished. The country has been put into order and is without any fear of future disturbance. There is no sign of unrest anywhere." "Oh King", replied Śrī Kṛṣṇa, "do not be too confident, you have as yet, conquered only your petty enemies, one formidable opponent is still alive, and not only alive but he has taken his abode in the very heart of your Kingdom and

by eating into your very vitals, is growing more powerful every day. With such a dangerous foe living, how can you hope for peace?" Startled and surprised, the king remarked. "What do you mean, Kṛṣṇa, we have had as yet no news of such an adversary. Do tell me all you know about him." "Oh King", replied the Lord. "This enemy lives and thrives within the stronghold of your own body. He is known as Pride, troubles will not cease so long as he remains unsubdued."

The other story refers to another king, whose kingdom was called Balhika. In course of time that king became disgusted with the vanities of the world. Renouncing the kingdom and riches, he went to a forest, where he soon spied a hermitage. He requested the hermit to initiate him in the spiritual science. The hermit, without any reply employed him for certain duties in the hermitage. Every day, the king had to gather up fuel among the hills and return with a load on his head. Though unused to such work, the king showed admirable patience and perseverance and performed the duties assigned to him to the best of his ability.

One day it so happened, that a low-born menial, attached to the hermitage, slapped the king on the face because of a slight mistake he made in tying sticks into a faggot. The king did not retaliate, but said to himself,

"Had I been in the kingdom of Balhika, the fellow would have known what a slap might cost."

While, thus brooding, his heart grew heavy. He went to the hermit and after due salutations, said:—

"Revered Sir, it is long since I came here with the hope of being owned as your disciple, many of those who came after me have already been

initiated, but luck is still against me." "The time is not ripe for it yet," replied the hermit. "You carry about you the memories of your kingship. (The scent of royalty is yet on you.)"

These illustrations point to the extreme end of this vice, but there is no doubt that the more this evil is extirpated, the greater is one's success in spirituality.

Akin to pride is the desire to win fame. It is an equally strong *Desire for fame* obstruction on the spiritual path. One should never try

to make his progress known even to the best of friends. One should be as discreet in his spiritual practices as people are with regard to their worldly secrets, because spiritual duties are to be performed not for the sake of popular applause, but for winning the grace of the Lord. One should work in such a manner as to find favour in His eyes, let people think whatever they like. There was a hermit who mostly kept silent and neither criticised anyone nor joined in any discussion. His answer was,

"Truth is deprecated in this world, and falsehood by God—so, as a rule, I do not open my mouth."

If luckily one begins to attain some spiritual progress, he should *Superhuman powers* neither feel proud of it nor feel contented with it, because the eventual goal is the identity with the Absolute. If one succeeds in gaining some super-human power, as a result of Divine practices one should not become puffed up with it and should not stop there as these are nothing compared with the Divine Bliss.

When a feeling of pride enters one's mind, he should think over his own worth. A man in himself is nothing. Just as a drop of water in itself is of no use, so is the man in the Universe. It is only by seeking union with the Infinite

that he is glorified. Man is a tiny trumpeting gnat in the boundless empire of space above and below, though he considers himself so big in his own microscopic vision.

Sometimes a man attains some super-human powers and becomes swollen headed. However, these achievements are really nothing. One may control his breath and remain motionless for hours, nay years, till dust covers him, but do not even stones do the same? He may remain a thousand feet below the ground and during that period, cities, rail-roads and temples might have risen upon him. However this fossil existence discoverable only by geological enterprises, does not mean salvation, for in that respect, the tiny worms and insects which every stratum of earth exhibits on excavation, should be better sages than he. He may live without food, but that is nothing, for dyspepsia does not mean salvation.

What is really required of man is that he should know what the real 'I' means and realize its boundless glory, in which suns and spheres constellations and the milky ways are like drops which nature's mighty heart drives through the thinnest veins.

A Yogi went to a sage and claimed that he could fly in the air, remain underground for months together, lie on the surface of water and perform such other wonderful feats. The sage coolly replied,

"Brother, birds fly in the air, worms lie concealed under the earth for years and fish live in water, what merit is there in your doing what the lower animals can do? Try and imitate God, become divine in your Love for others, in wisdom and humility. Above all, give up vanity."

It has been said above that life is not unreal, as some people
Love for the World think it to be. However, as has been remarked elsewhere one must not become too much attached

to it, because love of the world is not the real goal of human life. One should put the worldly objects into use, but quite dispassionately. The world has to be vacated sooner or later, then why cling to it? A traveller never considers a Sarai his home.

One should be like a child. It plays with the toys but does not feel worried, if they are broken; and is sure of a fresh supply through its father. Similarly, we should believe that our Heavenly Father will certainly provide us with other things (provided we need them) if He takes away some from us. If they are not replaced, we must believe that it was in our own interest and the retention of the things taken away would have been harmful to us.

We enjoy a rented house and its furniture, etc. all right, but never presume that those things are to remain with us permanently and we never refuse to return them if demanded by their master. So should we think of all the worldly objects including riches, possessions, wife, children, nay, even our body.

If one wishes to tread the beautiful paths of godliness, he should not let himself be weighed down with the earth and all that is earthly, one should believe that the more one abandons and renounces them for the sake of God, the more He shall give him out of His grace. Another the greater the grace the quicker will be one's progress towards his goal. The more quickly one progresses the greater grows his yearning to renounce all, in order to be able to advance still faster.

He must be an idiot, who, when asked to give up his old rickety ekka and take his seat in a beautiful aeroplane, rejects the proposal and clings to that broken ekka. The same is the case with this world and the kingdom of heaven. God cannot be realized by those who are altogether lost and absorbed in the world.

We cannot serve both God and Mammon. We must devote ourselves to the Lord's service whole-heartedly. We must serve Him with singular devotion, ignoring everything else. We should think of the favours we have been receiving from the Lord ever since our entry into the womb of our mothers.

We should solely look at Him, for the more we look at others, the more distant will be the vision of the Creator. And if we give ourselves wholly to God, even then we might err in many respects, so what would become of us if we were to dissipate our love among our fellow creatures? It has been said by a saint.

"The maiden who offers herself to God, must be holy in body and in spirit, and must not have more than one care, i.e., to please her Lord."

All our strength is in the Lord, and He communicates His favours to him who is watchful in his mind and applies himself devotedly to His quest.

We should always ask ourselves most seriously. Do we sincerely yearn for spiritual freedom? Have we felt how 'the world' burns and blisters the heart? Are we convinced that worldly desires fetter us? Do we know that fears, anxieties and doubts have their source in worldly attachment? Have we realized that sorrows and sufferings are due to the plurality of consciousness? If so, we are faithful seekers.

Life and property, of which we are so proud, are transient by nature. We cannot vouch for their existence even for a moment. There is no knowing, when there may be universal destruction. Hence, withdrawing all attachment from worldly enjoyment; we should lead pure lives in conformity with the injunctions of our scriptures and should scrupulously remember the Lord every moment. The man who is constantly, engaged in remembering the Lord is sure to attain Him, at any time and in any circumstances whatsoever.

If we succeed in our aim, non-attachment, will in the first place, bring about freedom from grief and fear. Attachment is the outcome of deception and delusion and nearly all the misery of the world is directly due to it. To be free is to be fearless. Bhartrihari says:—

"Everything in the world is fraught with fear. It is non-attachment that makes one fearless. "Secondly, as one dedicates his work to God, he approaches nearer and nearer the centre of his being, his inner self. God-consciousness gradually grows in him and eventually he finds himself entirely in the hands of God. A steady practice will enable a man to say with Thayaunavar "Everything is thy property, oh God, everything is thy doing, thou pervadest the whole universe."

(To be continued)



Jan van Ruysbroeck

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

The voice of Jan van Ruysbroeck comes down the centuries as a crystalline stream of beauty and harmony. In his words there is the deep rapture of a life lived in the Divine, and the burnished clearness of sunset seen from a high mountain peak when the heart is at peace in the grateful stillness of achievement. And as his whole life was love vibrating to all pain and suffering of his fellow-beings, his works are the harmonious strains of melody weaving their tale of the consummation of life firmly supported by the deep organ note of his own spiritual experience.

Through the intensity and feeling of his vision the old Flemish dialect in which he wrote gained a vividness of colour and a richness and loveliness of expression which must touch the hearts of all who take pains to approach him in sincerity and genuine yearning for the beauty that far outlasts in its immutable splendour the mockery of the unquenchable greed and ever-recurring ultimate frustration of worldly life and transient attachments. The stillness of the woods round Groenendaal, his beloved monastery in which he used to meditate, was as it were, the key-note of the great symphony of love, purity and Divine thought which he composed in their shadow and handed on to us as an invaluable heritage.

Jan van Ruysbroeck was born in a small village not far from Brussels in 1293. Hardly anything is known of

his family, not even the name Ruysbroeck being that of his native place adopted following a wide-spread custom of his day. After completing his studies and living for a time with his uncle who was a priest in Brussels, he left the world in 1343 and founded the monastery of Groenendaal where he died on the 2nd of December 1381.

His life was not rich in outer events but it still radiates the quiet glow of poetry and deep inner peace which formed so great a factor of his personality. His death has been touched by the golden wand of legend, transmuting it into a beautiful symbol of purity and dedication. It is told that, when after his passing away the brothers were watching the lifeless form of their beloved prior, life suddenly seemed to come back to his body, and they saw him rise and go to the altar to pray. He was dressed in his priestly robes and flooded by dazzling light which shed its splendour all around. They buried him the next day, but the light still glowed in the hearts of the monks and filled them with joy at having seen their prior come back once again before their eyes. And vision has greater power on the soul of man than the dry facts of our workaday world.

All his life Jan van Ruysbroeck stressed purity, non-attachment, imagelessness of the mind and the heart, and saw in that kind of activity that in its restlessness tries to possess our whole

being one of the greatest obstacles to meditation and higher development. To him union with the Divine was the only fulfilment of human destiny. So he saw Adam's sin not in choosing evil as such, but in his preferring the life of the senses to the life of oneness, the lure and earthly splendour of multiplicity to the Divine singleness. Multiplicity, to Jan van Ruysbroeck, being the principal obstacle to all higher life and the very root of all other obstacles, the path to the Divine lies through self-annihilation by rising above all the powers of the soul and the body, and freedom from all picturings of the mind and physical desire.

The stature of man must not be reduced to the requirements of the nation or the group, but must steadily grow beyond it into the vast realm of Absolute Truth which embraces all these, but cannot be circumscribed by them nor ever allow them to become the sole arbiters of his life and development. Too intense preoccupation with the social aspect of life unavoidably brings a lowering of man's finer sensitivity and an obscuring of his intuitive vision and is more and more liable to prevent him from recentralizing the centrifugal forces of phenomenal existence. It is towards the freedom of Divine realization that the human soul must grow through the multi-coloured experiences, achievements and disillusionments of its embodied existence,—to the plenitude of oneness that is peace.

Jan van Ruysbroeck's teaching of unity succeeded in keeping itself within the bounds of orthodox theology and

avoiding the stigmatization of heresy or pantheism as he had never gone so far as Meister Eckehart in asserting the ultimate oneness of soul and God. To him, man is God and infinite only in so far as the work of art is the artist. The idea of the created and everything creatable is eternally in God, and especially that of the soul. The soul thus being an idea of God, is God Himself and infinite and eternal, and for ever lies within the Divine Infinite Life. This is the life man possesses to use the words of Ruysbroeck "above himself and without himself in God". It is difficult for us to say how far there existed any real difference in the thought of Meister Eckehart and that of Jan van Ruysbroeck as to the ultimate Truth, and in how far the apparent difference is but a difference of expression and not a difference in the ultimate conception of Truth.

One of Ruysbroeck's sayings should be engraved with golden letters in the hearts of all sincere aspirants after spiritual life. It reminds one of the message of strength and undaunted courage and perseverance so often given to the world by Swami Vivekananda. He says, "Vos estis tam sancti sicut vultis. Tantum enim quisque sanctus est, quantum afficitur bonitati."—You are as holy as it is your wish to be. For everyone is as holy as he is moved by good.

May the subtle fragrance of the following quotations taken from his different writings penetrate into the heart of the reader and fill him with the certitude of the joy and gladness of the mystic quest and of that which for ever stands beyond our confused dreams and

phantoms of heartlessness, lust and greed! May the quiet beauty of their melody ceaselessly float like sweet but haunting strains through the commonplaceness of our workaday life, and slowly fill our whole being with the irresistible charm of Him who eternally exists beyond all change and ephemeral appearance and yet is eternally closer to the human heart and to the whole being of man than his senses and the magic show and jugglery they perceive around them and so greedily cling to !

OF THREE POINTS THAT MAKE A SPIRITUAL MAN

"If a man wishes to become not merely a good man, but truly spiritual, three things are of utmost need:—a heart free from all affections and from all occupations, distractions and feelings that do not lead Godward or that lead away from Him, an inner freedom from all desires, and the feeling of inward unity with God."

"He who wishes to possess an unencumbered heart free from all that separates him from God, must not possess anything with love nor be attached or cleave to anybody in sensual love or walk with him. For any love and any conduct that is not purely for the sake of God perverts and deforms the human heart, for it is not born of God but of the flesh. Therefore, if a man wishes to become spiritual, he must renounce all and any fleshly love and cleave unto God alone with all his desire and all his affection, and thus possess Him. Thereby all bondage of the heart in the trammels of love for creatures is broken, and if a man truly possesses

God, then he becomes free from all pictures inwardly, God being a Spirit whom none can really picture."

"But during the time of his practice man should take good pictures of the virtues of our Lord and of everything that tends to create greater devotion. As soon, however, as he comes to possess God, he must fall back on the true picturelessness that is God. This is the first point of a truly spiritual life."

"The second point is inner freedom, that is, that a man should be able to lift himself up unhindered and unencumbered to God in inner practice, that is, in thanksgiving, in dignity, in devout prayer, in deepest love and in everything that awakens desire and love for God and an inner seriousness for all spiritual practice."

"By means of this inward practice the third point is reached, that is, that one feels a spiritual union with God. Whoever has in his inner practice an unencumbered and free access to his God and only intends His honour, must feel an inward true union with God. And it is in this union that spiritual life is perfected. For by this union the desire for God is steadily renewed and brings one to a new inward action which in its turn again lifts up the soul to a new union with Him. And this renewing in working and in union is spiritual life."

(*From Van den blinckenden steen—Of the Shining Stone*)

THE FIGHT AGAINST LAZINESS, GLUTTONY AND INCONTINENCE

"We must watch ourselves carefully and guard ourselves from three sins

which reign in the body, that is:— laziness, gluttony and incontinence. Through these many a well-intentioned man has fallen into great sin."

"Against gluttony we must love and choose moderation and sobriety, and always draw ourselves away from and take less of what tempts us, remaining satisfied with the barest necessities."

"Against laziness we must feel in our innermost, faith and loving-kindness and have compassion for all distress, and outwardly we must be quick and zealous and ever ready for everyone who needs us according to our capacity and discrimination."

"Against incontinence we must outwardly and inwardly shun and flee all disorderly association and practice,— all unclean imagination and pictures, so that we do not dwell nor remain in them with lustful inclination, for if we do this we become deformed and perverted and unclean in nature."

"And we must guard ourselves against bad company, such as those who are found of lying, swearing, and blaspheming, impure in words and in deeds. Such you must shun and flee as the enemy of hell."

"Guard your eyes and your ears, so that you may not see or hear that which is not allowed to be done. Keep yourself pure. Love to be alone. Flee all manifoldness. Practise your religion and with your hands do good works. Hate idleness. Shun disordinate amusements, and be not in love with your-

selves. Love life and truth. And even if you have found yourselves pure, shun all occasion for sin. Love penitence and work."

(*From Van VII Trappen in den graed gheesteleker minnen.—Of VII Steps in the degree of spiritual Love.*)

THE DANGER OF INCONTINENCE

That is incontinence when an uncurbed continually moving nature with the consent of the will and desire delights in impure picturings inwardly and in impure works of the body outwardly. For when such a person is inclined to impurity and recognizes this with his reason, and does not blame it but remains therein with joy and consent of his will, the sin has been committed inwardly. But if he further consents in incontinent works then the sin is increased. Further: thus is this sin fed with seeing, with speaking, with shameless entreaties, with disorderly walking, within any manner shameless and unfitting touching and with all the things that may drag one down towards incontinence. That is why our Lord says, "He who desires a married woman has committed adultery in his heart." And therefore all these things are deadly sin, in whatever station one may be except in marriage, when a man commits them in impure lust or so as to drag another man into impurity. But they are not all equally weighty. For touching and such things which heat a man most, are certainly graver and greater sin than seeing or speaking and other things that heat one and move one less. This sin is also weightier in holy times or in holy station of life. And in this

point those who are married and live dishonestly, without fear of God, are also often infected.

This is harmful for a man in many ways. It is a disgrace done to God, for it soils His temple which is the soul. It is pleasing to the devil, for a man then seeks rest in uncleanness. It injures the body and scandalizes the fellow-Christian. It condemns the soul and makes it serve the flesh and sensuality. And that is why St. Gregory teaches us eight important points into which an incontinent man falls. The first is infatuation of reason and of thought. The second, lack of foresight of death and hell. The third point is unsteadiness of reflection and of desire:—now this, now that, just as it happens to come into the mind. The fourth point is: self-love, and by means of this love man desires to live long in order that he may follow his will and his pleasures for a long time. The fifth point is: that such a man places in jeopardy his good and his honour and his life, so as to achieve his unclean desire. The sixth point is, that he begins to hate God, because God gives pain to them who follow the pleasures of the body to which they are inclined. The seventh point is: lust and love of this world, for such a man desires honour, riches, health and strength and all things that may help him in this temporal world to lead a worldly life. The eighth point is: distrust of future life, that is that he does not trust God or rely on God, believing that he may ever attain His grace and His glory. And this is the last and the worst point, wherein an incontinent man or any sinner may fall. And so

long as man is incontinent and gluttonous, he is not worthy of becoming a priest. For he scorns the service of our Lord and serves in impurity his impure flesh. But if a man wishes to become and remain sober and continent for the sake of God's honour and his own blessedness, he must love those things that may further him in this. And he must hate and shun and flee all the things that may hinder him. In the first place he must be careful in seeing and hearing and walking, and he must shun all occasions that might attract him, and he must never trust himself. For the holy David felled the wise Solomon and the strong Samson. He should never be idle but busy himself always in good works, inwardly and outwardly. He must curb and mortify his body with reasonable penitence according to his capacity. And he should often ponder his death and the just judgment of God. And with wisdom and strength he must always resist temptations in their very beginning. And thereby he shall overcome incontinence."

(*From Van den gheesteliken Tabernakel,—Of the Spiritual Tabernacle.*)

WHAT IS JUSTICE

"This is justice:—to be emptied of and free from care for all creatures and to be uplifted in intention, in desire, in soul, in body, with eyes, with hands and with all one may do, in order to give God praise and honour in time and eternity, and not to seek enjoyment therein, for that creates duality and thus is a hindrance to justice. But he who lives in such lovingness is never without great joy."

"The just is given in the introspective powers of the soul unmeasured Divine Light, incomprehensible Love and Divine Joy, whereby he becomes one with that Light and that Love and that Joy, and henceforth is an all-sufficient man with regard to God and all creatures, inflowing in oneness, outflowing in manifold works of virtue through the indwelling image of the Father, transformed into the likeness of God."

(*From Dat Rijcke der Ghelyeven,—The Kingdom of Lovers*)

THE RULE OF PERFECTION

"Jesus Christ has made a rule that he himself lived and taught to his disciples and to all men who wish to follow him. There are many men who vow to follow his rule, but few are they who keep it and follow it in truth. It is not dictated, but recommended by the Holy Ghost, not enforced, but voluntary. Christ speaks thus, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Further, "If any man wishes to be perfect, he must go and sell all he has and give to the poor and come and follow me", and become a willing poor man for the sake of God's honour. And thus he may live of the common good of the willing poor who neither have nor possess anything in the world themselves. They are heavenly gateways and abide in Christ, their abbot and king in eternal life."

"Christ came into this world as into his own realm that was his by nature, by right, by grace. For he was God and man, king of kings, creator of all creatures, prince and guardian of all men,

and all things are under his power and might. So he left the world and all that it might do for him and chose poverty and to become a poor servant under all men, and he said himself, "My kingdom is not of this world." And he gave all he had and all he was and all he could to his disciples and to the willing poor unto the last. He and His disciples lived of common good, no one separately, but everyone according to his needs with discrimination in right charity. This is the first rule that Christ lived and taught to his disciples and to all men who wish to follow him and who are fit for it."

"After that follows the second point in the same rule, which is purity of soul and of body. He who is tied by the law or by any position in religion must keep his fetters and his vows and his faithfulness which is justice and God's command."

Those who in their youth have vowed to God purity in a religious Order or outside an Order must walk with pure men. They must fast, watch and pray and supply only their barest needs, be fond of reading and hearing the word of God, and always like to be alone. They must not seek pleasure and enjoyments in God or in creatures, but carry Jesus pictured in their hearts, tortured and crucified through love. Those who remain thus, shall overcome flesh and blood, the enemy and the world, and all the charms of the soul and the body. And this Christ teaches with his own person."

"For when he wished to found and establish his rule, he came to St. John the Baptist and let himself be

baptized. And his spirit led him into the desert away from all men where he fasted, watched and prayed. And he wished to be tempted by the enemy of gluttony, of spiritual pride and of greed. But he drove away the enemy with his own strength with the words of God and Holy Scripture in honour of his Father. After that he wandered beside the lake of Galilee and gathered his disciples from all the peoples of Israel. And they heard his voice and left all things and followed him in poverty and in purity. But in their minds they were disobedient to his spirit, uneven tempered, contrary, imperfect in charity. For he desired to bear, to suffer and to die for the sins of the world, and they wished to live without dying, and with pleasure and hearty love to cleave unto him and remain down here with him unto the last day of the world, had this been possible."

"Christ gives another robe to those of his disciples who disdain themselves and curb their sensual nature and follow his advice in an inward spiritual life. And this robe is woven of three colours. And it is called purity of soul and of mind: purity in body, cleanness of heart, chastity of mind."

"If thou wishest to live above the commandments of God,
The flesh thou must despise in thyself, and the blood.
If thou wishest to become pure,
All occasion to sin thou must flee.
If in innocence thou desirest to follow Christ,
Thou must win with His grace Purity's robe.
If thou wishest to overcome thy flesh and thy blood with God's grace,
Fight thou must with the spirit

Against pleasures and the lust of the senses.
Love must thou, and hate must thou with the Lord
If charity thou wishest to keep.
And war must thou make between spirit and flesh;
Then may purity thrive in thy soul."

"And choose no one specially to be fond of, but love all men with an equal and general love for the praise and honour of God. Hate the sins, but love the sinner. For you do not know whom God has chosen and whom he has rejected. And desire not to please anyone for what is transient. Attract no one, nor let yourselves be attracted by anyone in disordinate love, with walking nor with a holy semblance, or you lose your purity. Love those who are pure in soul and in body and who seek the honour of God and desire it in you and in all men. But shun and flee all association born out of sensual inclination, however holy it may seem. Be fond of hearing and speaking of God in short words, repeat the things that are beneficial to you and all other men. Prefer always to keep silence to speaking without benefit and without need. Guard your eyes and your ears against curiosity, so that you may not become inclined to desires and to those things that are not allowed. Be sober and moderate in food and drink, as befits your nature. For gluttony and beauty of dress are occasions of sin for many a man and the cause of many sins. Be pure with your mouth and curb your tongue from idle and useless words without fruit. Tomfoolery and joking is losing time and great defect in a good man. Lying and envious backbiting, false rumours, swearing, blaspheming

the name of God, are deceitful sins leading to damnation."

"If pure thou wishest to be,
Carefully guard thyself against all
such sins."

"Like to be alone and turn inwards and seek the grace of God with unfeigned attention. Fast and watch and pray and be steady and faithful and put all your consolation in God. Thus you may attain purity of body and keep it with the grace of God."

"To the purity of heart belongs a spiritual state:—that is, purity of heart lifted up with the help of the grace of God to Christ with desire and yearning, and to his heavenly Father. So does the pure heart that is closed to the world below and open above, receive the grace of God. The grace of God gives into the pure heart good will and good work. And that is the oil in the lamp. Christ gives his fire of charity in the oil of good works, so that the lamp may burn always. And thus the lamp is fed with grace and with yearning and with good works between man and God, the longer the more truly."

"But unpractised desire in good works cools down and takes away the taste and pleasure in virtues and purity, the longer the more thoroughly. For purity of heart and cleanliness of life become contaminated or are driven

away in three ways, that is, by the enemy, by the world, and by the laziness of the natural man."

"The hellish enemy charms the pure man with useless ponderings or with unchaste pictures, with curious imaginations and with many a foolish idea wherewith man forgets God and loses his time. The world also charms the pure man with love and suffering, with griefs, with cares for relations and friends, with manifold occupations of earthly things which burden the heart and pervert it and make it impure in many ways."

"Laziness of nature demands to eat and to drink well, sleep, profit, and comfort and consolation of creatures, and all that may reasonably be after his thought without sin. See, these are the things that infect the purity of heart and soil it. And therefore we must fight against our enemies if we wish to gain the victory. What is born of flesh, is flesh, and what is born of spirit, is spirit. These two are mutually contrary. Now, if we live after the flesh, we die in sin. But if we are born of God after the spirit with grace and faith and trust in God, we can bend nature under reason and under the commandments and under the law and under the will of God."

(From Van de XII Beghinien—Of the XII Beguines)



The Sadhana of Theosophy

BY HIRENDRA NATH DATTA, M. A., B. L., VEDANTARATNA

The Editor of *Kalyan* has invited me to contribute a short article to its "Sādhana" number on the Sādhana of Theosophy. At the outset, I want to make it clear that Theosophy is not a religion, as Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism or Christianity is. Theosophy has been rightly called the pure Mathematics of religion, which is behind and beyond all religions. It is the ancient Wisdom named *Brahma-vidyā* in the Upaniṣad and being the *parā* or supreme *Vidyā* is identical with the age-old *Vedānta*, which Madame H. P. Blavatsky (the re-proclaimer of Theosophy in the modern world) regarded as the beginning and the end of all human wisdom. Now what has Theosophy to say about Sādhana?

To start with, Theosophy speaks of the Jīva, the individual self (who when the time is ripe to embark on this Sādhana), as a Divine fragment (*Mamaivānśa* as the *Gītā* phrases it), a spark of the Universal Fire, a wavelet of the Ocean of Immorality—thus endorsing the *Mahā-Vākyas* of the Vedas "Tat Tvam asi", "Soham", etc. The Jīva and the Brahma are therefore essentially identical—both being triune in nature—Sat Chit and Ānanda. The only difference is that whereas Brahma is *Suryakta Satchidānanda*, the glorious Trinity of Power, Wisdom and Bliss (as Theosophy puts it)—the Jīva is *A-Vyakta Satchidānanda*, in whom those three aspects are still unmanifest. So Theosophy speaks of the Jīva as "Logos

in gestation", as "God in the becoming"—who in the course of evolution will one day attain the full similitude of God (*Mama Sādharmya*) and be able to say "I and my Father are one." How is this consummation to be achieved? How are these three aspects of Power, Wisdom and Bliss in the Jīva to be brought from latency into potency? By *Sādhana*, as we shall presently see.

Theosophy says that the Jīva-seeds are sown in the womb of Prakṛti—

मम योनिर्महद्वासा तस्मिन् गर्भे दधाम्यहम्

—sown in weakness, so that one day, they may be raised in power and from tiny seeds become mighty trees, or changing the metaphor, from flickering sparks may become full fledged flames.

In order that all this might be, the Jīva is, as it were, sent out on a prolonged pilgrimage.

तस्मिन् हस्ते भ्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रे

"The Haṃsa (called "Monad" in Theosophy) has to revolve in the Brahma-circle." This circle, as we shall see has two halves, called the *Pravṛtti-mārga* (the path of forth-going) and the *Nivṛtti-mārga* (the path of return).

The Monad first entered the mineral kingdom and after many lives as a mineral became a plant. He died from the plant and leaving the vegetable kingdom became an animal. In due course he died from the animal and entered the human kingdom.

It is interesting to note that in an old Hindu book, these stages of evolution are indicated fairly fully. There we are told of two million births of the Jīva successively in the mineral kingdom, followed by 900,000 in the vegetable, the same number in the reptilia, one million as birds, three millions as beasts, 400,000 as monkeys, until at last the human kingdom is reached.

Having reached the human stage, he first becomes semi-civilized and by and by civilized. The majority of mankind, at the present day, are in this "civilized" stage, but Man is "still immature, ugly like an embryo, unfinished, incomplete and imperfect" (*Sir Oliver Lodge*), that is to say, he is yet treading the *Pravṛtti-mārga* and has still to grow by grasping, by appropriation. He has next to definitely turn the corner and to enter the *Nivṛtti-mārga* where the law of growth is giving, expropriation. Now it is time for the Jīva to take himself definitely in hand and to embark on a process of Sadhana so that by and by he may contrive "to be born again, born from above". In India, the twiceborn man is called a Brahman and the *Brihad Viṣṇupurāṇa* says that having passed through millions of births, the Jīva at last attains Brahmanhood. The Brahman must, in due course, build into his nature the fourfold qualification which makes him an *Adhikārī*—the qualities of Viveka, Vairagya, Sat Sam-patti and Mumukṣatwa—discrimination, desirelessness, self-control, tolerance, etc. In this way he fits himself for Initiation and in due course becomes an Initiate. Theosophy, endorsing the teaching of the Vedānta, speaks of four

grades of Initiates. Śrī Śankarāchārya calls them *Kutichaka*, *Bahudaka*, *Hamsa* and *Paramahamsa*. They are spoken of in Buddhism as *Śrotapanna*, *Sakṛtāgamin*, *Anāgamin* and *Arhat*, the Paramahamsa or Arhat being he who has received the fourth initiation. The next initiation lifts the Jīva from the grade of Initiate to that of an Adept. The Adepts are "just men made perfect" whom in this country we call Rṣis.

The Rṣi when he takes the sixth Initiation is called the *Maharṣi* and when the *Maharṣi* takes the seventh Initiation he becomes the *Paramarṣi* in Theosophy. They are called Chohan and Mahā-chohan. Thus the Jīva who began in nescience, by Sadhana has now progressed to omniscience.

But even now he has not finished his Sadhana. It is now time for him to leave the level valley and scale the steep mountain top—from the normal he must now pass to super-normal evolution. This is hinted at by Maulana Rumi when he says in pregnant words, "Next time I shall die from the Man that I may grow the wings of the Angel", that is, become a superman—what the Upaniṣad speaks of as *Svarāt*, *Virāt*, thus becoming a cosmocrator, a very Archangel, to take charge of one of the innumerable solar systems which are scattered like dust in the immensities of space, as what we designate in Theosophy a Solar Logos. Even then, has he fulfilled his destiny? Not yet. So Rumi goes on:—

"Once more shall I wing my way
above the Angels. I shall become
that which entereth not the

imagination. Verily unto Him
shall I return.'

Return where? Return to our *Aṣṭa*,
which is the Vedic word for "home".
This "home" is none other than God.

Trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.

This is called Brahma-Sayujya in
the Vedānta—"become Brahma, he then
attains Brahma (*Bṛhad.* IV. iv. 6). Now
he can at last say, "It is finished"! Such
is the glorious destiny which
Theosophy chalks out for the
Jīva.

The Later South Indian Vaishnava Saints-II

(Continued from the previous number)

BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

SRI RAMANUJACHARYA

The traditional date of Sri Ramanujacharya is Kali era 4119, Pingala, Chitrai, Arudra asterism. He was the son of Kesava Somayaji and Kantimati and was born at Sriperumbudur about 1017 A. D. Kantimati was the sister of Sri Sailapurna who was referred to above as a disciple of Sri Yamunacharya. Sri Ramanuja began his Vedantic studies under an Advaita teacher named Yadavaprakasa. His cousin Govinda Bhatta also studied along with him. One day when Yadavaprakasa expounded the words in the Upaniṣad describing God thus "Kapyā-sam Pundarikam Evam Aksini" as meaning one whose eyes are like the posterior parts of a monkey, Sri Ramanujacharya's eyes were blinded by tears. He denied the correctness of the meaning and said that the words meant "one whose eyes are like the lotus made to blossom by the sun." It is said that Yadavaprakasa grew angry at being baited by the young man and resolved to get rid of him after reaching Benares. Govinda Bhatta who heard about the

evil scheme warned Ramanuja when they were going through a forest in the Vindhya mountains. Ramanuja escaped during the night and lost his way and is said to have been miraculously and suddenly taken to Conjeevaram towards dawn by an old hunter and his wife who were really God Viṣṇu and Goddess Lakṣmi and who suddenly disappeared. In course of time Yadavaprakasa returned and heard from Ramanuja how he happened to go to Conjeevaram. Ramanuja continued his religious studies under his old teacher. But they soon drifted apart as their religious views were divergent and irreconcilable.

Ramanuja then became devoted to the worship of God Devaraja of Conjeevaram. Kanchipurna, a non-Brahman disciple of Alavandar was an ardent devotee of Devaraja who, it is said, used to speak with him in the language of men. Alavandar sent his disciple Mahapurna to bring Ramanuja to systematize and establish the Viśiṣṭādvaita cult. Both Kanchipurna and Mahapurna persuaded Ramanuja to go to Srirangam and meet Alavandar. He

did so. But on his way he saw the burial of Alavandar who had died before he came. He saw that three fingers of the right hand of Alavandar were closed. He asked why it was so. He was told that Alavandar had three unfulfilled wishes and had closed his fingers in the act of counting them. The three wishes were that a Viśiṣṭadvaita commentary should be written on the Vyāsa Sūtras, and that the name of Parāsara should be perpetuated and that the name of Nammalvar should be perpetuated. Ramanuja agreed to carry out the wishes and it is said that then the fingers opened out of their own accord.

Ramanuja then returned to Conjeevaram and resumed his worship of God Devaraja. He once invited Kanchipurna for meals. Kanchipurna went to his house and took his meals and went away, though Ramanuja had not yet returned to his house. When Ramanuja came back he found that his wife had thrown away the leaf from which the devotee ate and had bathed to get rid of the impurity caused by feeding a Non-Brahman. Ramanuja was incensed at her conduct and grieved at having an ill-matched wife.

Perianambi (Mahapurna) was then sent again to fetch Ramanuja to systematize and expound and establish the Vaiṣṇava cult. In the meantime Ramanuja himself had started to meet him. Both met at Madurantakam. There Ramanuja received initiation under Perianambi into the Vaiṣṇava Mantra. He then took Perianambi and his wife to his house. He studied the scriptures under Perianambi. His wife and Perianambi's wife had some misunderstanding and so Perianambi and his wife left Conjeevaram for Srirangam without telling Ramanuja. Ramanuja then learnt about the pettiness of his wife and broke away from family life and became a Sannyāsi (ascetic).

A Brahman named Kuresa and Ramanuja's sister's son Dasarathi became Ramanuja's followers. Yadavaprakasa became his disciple and was converted under the name of Govinda Yati. He wrote a famous work called *Yatidharma Samuchchaya* which is a manual of the duties of ascetics.

Sri Ramanuja then went to Srirangam accompanied by Dasarathi. Kuresa followed them soon after. Garuda Bhatta was converted from Saivism by Sri Sailapurna and went to Srirangam and became a Sannyāsi and a disciple of Ramanuja, under the name of Embar.

Another convert to Ramanuja's cult was an Advaitic scholar named Yajnamurti who became a Sannyāsi by name Devaraja Muni.

Ramanuja then went to Tirukoshtiyur to learn from Tirukottiyur Nambi the greatness and value of the Aṣṭākṣara Mantra and the Charama Śloka of the *Gītā*. On learning the Mantra and its saving power, Sri Ramanuja proclaimed it from the temple tower to the crowd below. On being asked by the teacher why he did so and thus incurred the consequence of going to hell for disobeying the teacher who had imparted it with a strict injunction not to reveal it to others, he replied: "Let one man go to hell. All these souls will attain grace by hearing the Mantra and will go to heaven." Nambi then said: "You are a noble man. You will be saved from the sin of disobeying the teacher's mandate. The philosophy will henceforth be known by your name."

Ramanuja then studied the Tiruvoimozhi (Tamil Vaiṣṇava hymns) under competent teachers like Tirumalaiandan and became an expert therein. He studied the spiritual secrets of the Rāmāyaṇa from Tirumalai Nambi.

Sri Ramanuja then wrote his *Vedartha Sangraha* wherein he sought to establish Viśiṣṭadvaitism by reference to Upani-

sadic passages. He then began and finished his *Magnum Opus*, the elaborate *Bhaṣya* on the Vedānta Sūtras. It is popularly known as *Śrī Bhaṣya*. He wrote also the *Vedānta-Sāra* which contains the Sūtras with a brief and simple gloss thereon, and the *Vedānta Dipa* which is a fuller and more elaborate work. He wrote also a great *Bhaṣya* on the *Gītā*. Other works by him are the *Gadya Traya* and the *Nitya*.

He then went round India on a trip, which was a combined pilgrimage and tour of conquest. He went from Srirangam to Kumbakonam and then to the shrines in Madura and Tinnevelly including the shrine at Alvar Tirunagari where Satakopa was born. He then went to Travancore and Malabar and then to Girnar and Dwaraka and Muttra and Govardhana and eventually to Badrinath and Srinagar. Then he went to Benares and Puri. From there he went to Tirupati. There was a dispute going on then at Tirupati as to whether the God at Tirupati was Viṣṇu or Śiva. It is stated that Ramanuja placed before the deity the Viṣṇu symbols of conch and discus as well as the Śiva symbols and that next morning the deity was found wearing the Viṣṇu symbols alone. He then went to Conjeevaram, Tirukoilur, Tiruvahindrapuram and Viranarayananapuram and eventually reached Srirangam after a long and successful tour in which he visited the shrines of God and established his philosophy in various places in India.

Sri Ramanuja managed the affairs of the Srirangam temple in an admirable manner. His disciples and followers began to increase. He founded 74 spiritual offices and established 74 dignitaries (*Siṁhāsanādhipatis*) there. He had 700 Sannyāsi disciples. To one of his disciples he gave the name of Satakopa Kurukesa and thus redeemed another of the pledges to Alavandar.

To his friend Kuresa's son he gave the name of Parasara and thus redeemed his third pledge. Kurukesa wrote a commentary called *Six Thousand* (*Arrayirappadi*) on the thousand verses of Satakopa. Parasara wrote a commentary on the *Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma* called *Bhagaval-guṇadarpaṇa* and other works.

Kulothunga Chola I was the king of the Chola at that time. He was a bigoted Śaiva. He sent for Ramanuja to compel him to accept Śiva as God. Kuresa personated Ramanuja and went to the palace accompanied by Mahapurna. When they went to the king's court, they tried to convert him to Vaisnavism. He grew angry and had their eyes put out. They then stumbled on to Srirangam. Mahapurna died on the way. Kuresa reached Srirangam and eventually went to Tirumalirunjolai in the Madura District.

In the meanwhile Ramanuja and some of his followers fled from Srirangam. They went to Mysore. They went to Mirle and Saligram. He converted there one Anthrapurna. He then reached Tonnur where resided king Bitti Deva, of the Hoysala dynasty. The capital of that kingdom was Dwārasamudra (the modern Halobid). The king's daughter was possessed. Ramanuja cured her. The king was then converted by him to Vaisnavism and changed his name to Viṣṇuvardhana. Ramanuja defeated the Jaina religious leaders in disputation. It is said that when thousands of them began to question him, he sat inside a curtain and assumed the form of Ādiśeṣa with a thousand tongues and answered them all. He had a large lake dug, and for its steps he is said to have used the slabs which were got from the demolished Jaina temples. The lake (Moti Talab) exists to this day. He stayed in Mysore for nearly twenty years and consolidated the Vaiṣṇava faith there. He built a

famous Viṣṇu temple at Tirunarayana-puram (Melkote), a few miles north of Mysore. He established there the stone image of God Nārāyaṇa which he recovered from a place which was revealed to him in a dream. From his dream he learnt that a beautiful copper idol of God, named Rāmapriya, was with the Mahomedan princess at Delhi and was loved by her exceedingly. He went there and the idol came into his hands after considerable parley and persuasion. He took it and established it in the temple. As the local Pañchamas were of great assistance to him in preserving the image and in building the temple he gave them a certain limited right of entry and worship in the temple. The right exists and is enjoyed to this day. He then went to Padmagiri (Śravana Balagola) and vanquished the Jain disputants there and converted many persons to his faith.

Meantime the Chola king died. He then left Mysore for Srirangam. An image of Ramanuja was installed for worship before his disciples could let him go back to Srirangam. He reached Srirangam and resumed his old worship and teaching. He learnt that God Govindaraja's image had been removed from Chidambaram under the orders of the former Chola king and that it was in Tirupati. He built a shrine for the deity at Tirupati and installed the image there. He then returned to Srirangam and lived there a saintly life and died in his one hundred and twentieth year in 1137 A. D.

Ramanuja had an extraordinarily fascinating personality besides his being one of the greatest philosophers of all time. He had a subtle intellect and a capacious heart and was full of love of man and adoration of God. He went all over India and consolidated his faith

in many practical ways and was thus a religious leader and a religious statesman and not a mere monk or bookworm or philosophic system-builder. He was the father of the Bhakti cult in North India and West India as well. Ramananda and later on Chaitanya owed much to his ennobling and elevating and spiritualizing influence. He was thus one of the master-minds of India and takes a honoured rank along with Sri Śankarachārya and Sri Madhwāchārya.

Sri Ramanuja's philosophy is a link between monism and dualism and is called Viśiṣṭādvaitism because it inculcates the Advaita or oneness of God while postulating His Viśeṣa or attributes. According to it, the souls (Chit) and matter (Achit) are ensouled by God. God is the Immanence and Transcendence which ensouls and rules and guides everything. God is Satchidānanda. The evolution of matter is postulated by Ramanuja and his theory of evolution is called Parināmavāda. During the stage of involution Chit and Achit are absorbed in His Being. God is the material cause (Upādānakāraṇa) as well as efficient cause (Nimittakāraṇa) of the universe. Creation is real and has no element of unreality at all. Creation is the projection of matter on its career of evolution by the Divine Will working with the object of giving embodiments to souls to work out their Karmic fruits and attain God. Thus creation is due to His Lila (Sport) and Dayā (Loving Compassion). We have to know the will of God from the Śrutis and the Smṛtis. Sri Ramanuja's philosophy is thus of great value and charm and gives us a clear and bright vision of the destiny of man and the glory of God.

(To be continued)

The Kalyana-Kalpataru



Sri Rama ascending the Celestial Car

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYĀNA KALPĀTRU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā VI. 30*)

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यत्कीर्तनं यत्स्वरणं यदीक्षणं
यद्वन्दनं यच्छ्रवणं यदहृणम् ।
लोकस्य सद्यो विधुनोति कलमषं
तस्मै सुभद्रश्वरसे नमो नमः ॥

(*Bhāgavata II. iv. 15*)

"Obeisance, again and again, to that Lord of most auspicious fame, the singing of whose glory, the constant remembrance of whom, the sight of whom, the obeisance to whom, the listening to whose glory and the honouring of whom instantaneously blow away the sin of mankind."



The Glory of Saints—II

(Continued from the previous number)

BY JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA

EQUANIMITY IN SAINTS

Not only compassion, but even the equanimity of saints is wonderful, and it will be no exaggeration if they are described as the very image of equanimity. God is equanimous, and the saints are established in God—therefore they naturally acquire the equanimous character. Just as the man without wisdom when experiencing pleasure and pain remains placidly attached to the body, even so the saints maintain evenness with regard to all beings in creation.

Q. Do the saints gain the same amount of love for all beings, as men without wisdom possess for their own bodies? Or, do they lose love for beings in creation even as they lose love for their bodies? What is the character of their equanimity?

A. The character of their equanimity is so extraordinary that it cannot be properly brought out with the help of any illustration, for the saints do not possess the same type of 'Mineness' for the world as men without wisdom possess for their bodies. Therefore, it does not appear proper to say that the saints develop the same type of love for all beings, as men without wisdom possess for their bodies; and want of love cannot be affirmed in their case because whereas men without wisdom, in the interest of their bodies, easily commit acts which injure others, the

saints sacrifice with pleasure even their bodies for the good of others. And their evenness is so wonderful that when they sacrifice their bodies for the sake of others, they are not touched by any adverse thought. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to explain the character of their equanimity with the help of any parallelism. Nevertheless, tradition as well as the scriptures approve of the analogy that just as men without wisdom, while experiencing pleasure and pain, remain evenly attached to their bodies, even so the saints, without feelings of egotism and 'Mineness' with reference to pleasure and pain suffered by Jivas, remain equanimous. In other words, just as men without wisdom feel pleasure and pain when going through favourable and adverse circumstances of life, even so the saints though devoid of the ego and remaining untouched by their personal pleasures and sorrows, appear as if experiencing pleasure and pain through the pleasure and pain of others. Man reaches this state through the practice of cultivation of the reverse thought (प्रतिपक्षमावनम्). The man without wisdom identifies himself with his own body and looks upon other bodies as belonging to others; contrary to this, identification of the self with other bodies, and feeling of detachment with regard to one's own body, is called cultivation of the reverse thought. Through ignorance about the secret of the saints' equanimity, many a person makes improper use of scrip-

tural statements on the subject. In the *Gitā* the Lord said :—

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि इस्तनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥

(V. 18)

"The wise look with the same eye on a Brahman endowed with learning and culture, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a Chāndāla."

Misinterpreting this text, they assert that removal of restrictions with regard to food and drink is the proper definition of equanimity. But such equality of treatment is neither possible nor necessary, nor is it the intention of the Lord, according to the above statement. For, the elephant is a beast of burden, and the dog is not. The cow's milk is a delicious drink, and not the milk of the bitch or of the she-elephant. The food, habits, character, form, class, and virtues of all these being peculiar to each, and different from each other, equality of treatment with regard to them is not possible, nor should be adopted, nor can be insisted upon. Just as one strives to gain for himself happiness and objects which contribute to his happiness, and to avoid suffering and objects which contribute to his suffering, even so true practice of equality lies in doing what is proper in each case, keeping the real good of the creature in view, realizing that the same Ātmā (soul) breathes through all in an equal measure.

Take for instance the several parts of our body. We use the hand for holding an object, the eyes for seeing and the ears for hearing—thus though the functions of the respective senses are different we treat them all with equality so far as feeling of 'Mineness' is con-

cerned. Even so the treatment towards all should be what is proper in each case, maintaining an equality of outlook with regard to the feeling of 'Mineness'. Inequality upheld by the scriptures, when brought into practice, is not objectionable, rather it is helpful in spiritual life. Inequality which results in injury to another, is inequality in the true sense of the term. Though all women look alike man's conduct with reference to the mother, sister and wife is different according to the relation in each case, and this difference being approved and justified by the scriptures is worthy of being observed with care. Not only so, the revered mother, though an object of worship, is not touched when she is in her menses or in child-bed and, if touched, a bath is prescribed for purification. Such inequality is no inequality. Their observance leads to good, and infringement leads to harm. In a household the dog is supplied with bread, the cow with fodder and the patient with medicine, and all are not equally supplied with bread, fodder and medicine. This inequality is no inequality in the real sense of the term. Just as one does not deliberately do any injury to his self, does not inflict suffering on the self and seeks only its good and strives for the self's happiness and welfare, even so instead of inflicting suffering or harm to anybody, seeking and striving for the good of all is called equanimity or the spirit of equality. When this is maintained, observance of inequality in behaviour according to the requirement of each individual case, will be no inequality at all.

A person cultivates friendship with me, and another cultivates enmity. If I

am entrusted to adjudicate between them, I have to administer justice with an even hand; rather prevailing upon the friend and obtaining his consent, if I show some amount of partiality to the person who cherishes enmity towards me, it will also be practice of equanimity.

When one obtains any good and beneficial thing, he should divide it equally among all; but if he gives more or the best portion of it to others, and keeps less or the worst portion for himself, or even wholly deprives himself of any share in it—this inequality is no inequality at all! For it does not involve harm to anyone; on the contrary, there is sacrifice of self-interest on the part of the giver. Similarly, in the face of common danger and common suffering, when apportioning the same if one takes upon oneself a greater share and thereby prevents or minimizes the suffering of others, the practice will be no inequality; on the contrary, being an act of sacrifice, it will bring honour to the distributor. Being established in God, the saints acquire the equanimous character of God. Therefore it is possible for man to understand the complete secret of this wonderful equanimity only after realization of God.

In honour and dishonour, praise and blame also the saint maintains his equanimity, although it is not essential that he should always exhibit it in practice. He does not suffer from modifications like pleasure, grief, etc., when experiencing honour and dishonour.

Q. Do the saints suffer the same type of pain when they hear their praise

or receive honour as ordinary men suffer when they receive blame or dishonour? And reversely, do they derive the same type of joy from blame and dishonour, as ordinary men derive from praise and honour? What is the inward character of the saint's equanimity?

A. It is different from both the types mentioned above. In other words, in honour and dishonour, praise and blame though they may outwardly exhibit appropriate emotion according to circumstances, they do not experience any pleasure and pain.

Q. Does the saint, then, adopt any remedial or defensive measure against dishonour or blame?

A. He may do so if the action leads to any good to one who hurls dishonour, or to the vilifier, or to anybody else.

Q. Does he give his assent in practice to honour and fame when he receives them, or oppose them?

A. Respecting the scriptural injunctions he may adopt either of these attitudes according to the needs of place, time and circumstances. If the attitude of opposition tends to bring good to anyone, he may oppose them, and if their acceptance leads to anybody's good, he may accept them when legitimately received.

Q. Then how is a Mahāpuruṣa to be ascertained, judged from his outward conduct?

A. It is extremely difficult to ascertain a Mahāpuruṣa from external conduct. The utmost that may be known about him is that he is a good

man. Whether he is a self-realized soul, or a mere practicant will have to be left to guess-work. There is no harm in regarding both of them as saints, for the practicant will also gradually develop into a saint. As a matter of fact, he whose conduct is Sat (good) is a saint.

The saint maintains wonderful equanimity in gain and loss, victory and defeat as well.

Q. Even as ordinary men derive pleasure and pain from gain and victory, contrary to this does the saint feel delighted when he incurs loss or meets with defeat? Or, even as ordinary men suffer from repulsion, aversion, fear and grief when meeting with loss and defeat, does the saint similarly feel repulsion, aversion, fear, and grief when meeting with gain and victory?

A. No, his equanimity is finer than this. For he remains above all modifications of the mind like joy and grief, attraction and repulsion.

Q. When meeting with loss and defeat, can the saint, like ordinary men, show any reaction indicative of envy and fear?

A. If such reaction leads to any good of the world, or helps in the maintenance of a legitimate rule or established usage, he may show it. But his mind will suffer no modification.

Q. An external action before it actually takes place, is planned in the mind. How can an action take place without the mind being touched by it?

A. Just as actors in a play perform activities of various kinds, but feel

that they are only acting, and are not engaged in any practical business of life, even so the saint though engaged in external activities does not suffer from any modification of the mind.

In cold and heat, happiness and sorrow, and in experiences of agreeable and disagreeable kinds, he always maintains his equanimity. Always and everywhere, he keeps intact an evenness which is indivisible, eternal and synonymous with God Himself.

UNIVERSAL LOVE IN SAINTS

The saint possesses not only equanimity, but also motiveless, selfless, extraordinary, pure, universal love. Just as Lord Vāsudeva has motiveless love for all, even so after realization of Lord Vāsudeva, the saint develops motiveless love for the whole animate and inanimate creation. For, during the stage of practice he cultivates the thought that all is Vāsudeva. After attainment of perfection, this becomes a natural realization to him.

Q. Does one develop such motiveless love through the practice of Devotion, or through the practice of Knowledge?

A. This may be developed by following either of the paths. Those who follow the path of Devotion regard all beings as manifestations of God and therefore love them more than they love their bodies or their very life. And those who follow the path of Knowledge regard all beings as their very self, and love them as they love their body, life and self.

Q. The love of a man without wisdom is centred on his body, home, wife, children, possessions, etc. Is the saints' love for the universe of the same type as that love?

A. No, it is a most extraordinary type of love. For the sake of his body, home, wife, children, etc., the man without wisdom sacrifices morality, virtue, righteousness, God and the generous impulses of doing good to others; and in the interest of his body and life, he sacrifices the wife, children, possessions, etc. But the saint sacrifices not only his wife, children, possessions but even his own body, for the sake of morality, virtue, righteousness, God and the universe. For the protection of the universe, he sacrifices the world; for the protection of the world, the country, for the sake of the country, the village, for the sake of the village, the family, and for the family and all others mentioned above he gladly sacrifices his life itself. It is no wonder then that he sacrifices himself for the sake of religion, God and the entire universe. Just as a man without wisdom sacrifices everything else for his self, even so the saint sacrifices everything else for the sake of religion, God, and the universe, for they really constitute his self. But unlike men without wisdom, whose ego is identified with wife, children, and other relations, the saints' self is identified with nothing. Equally for all he possesses motiveless, spotless, supremely excellent, unlimited love.

Q. Why and how does the practising following the path of Devotion develop exceptional love for all beings,

greater than the love for their life itself.

A. They develop this form of love because they regard the whole universe as God Himself, the Deity of their heart.

सो अनन्य जाकैं असि मति न टरइ हनुमंत ।
मैं सेवक सचराचर रूप स्वामि भगवंत् ॥

"O Hanumān, he who does not deviate from the thought that he is the servant and all animate and inanimate forms in creation constitute the form of God, his Lord, is a devotee, who is undivided in his devotion."

Such a devotee sacrifices his all—body, mind, wealth—for the sake of the universe. Observing that things possessed by him are coming to some service of his Lord and Master, he feels delighted with the thought that the Lord accepted both himself and his things. The devotee considers this to be his ideal that he may regard all his possessions as belonging to God, therefore they should be utilized in the service of God. But so long as God does not take them into service, the devotee does not believe that God has accepted them, and so long as they are not accepted, the devotee does not feel that his ideal has been realized. But when these things are taken into service with pleasure by God in the form of the universe, the devotee feels supremely delighted regarding that his ideal has been realized. In the pleasure of God as universe lies his pleasure. That is why he loves the whole of animate and inanimate creation more than his life. If it is asked, when the devotee loves the universe for pleasing God, the deity

of his heart, how can his love be regarded as motiveless and pure, the answer is that this motive is no motive at all, it is a sentiment of the purest form. This should, in fact, be the supreme goal of a man's life.

The love which is based on personal interest is tainted or impure love. And when love which is cultivated for another's good is considered pure, then love given to others regarding them as God Himself should be love the character of which is supremely pure.

Q. Why and how does the follower of the path of Knowledge love others as equal to their body, life and self?

A. The follower of the path of Knowledge regards all other selves as his own self.

सर्वभूतस्यमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

(*Gītā VI. 29*)

"The Yogi who is united in Yoga with the all-pervading, infinite consciousness, and sees everyone with an equal eye, sees the Self pervading all beings and sees all beings in the Self."

When he regards all as the Self, it is quite reasonable that he should love the whole universe as his Self. Just as a man without wisdom regarding the body as the self devotes himself to the service of the body, even so the saint devotes himself to the good of all beings. It is such followers of the path of Knowledge devoted to the good of all beings, who realize the Paramātmā in His absolute or attributeless aspect. The Lord said in the *Gītā*—

ये त्वक्षरमनिदेश्यमव्यक्तं । पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमध्यं ध्रुवम् ॥
सनियस्थेन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र 'समतुदयः ।
ते प्राण्युवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥

(*Gītā XII. 3-4*)

"And those who controlling all their senses, and possessed of an equal mind everywhere, and engaged in the welfare of all beings, adore constantly the unthinkable, all-pervading, indefinable, ineffable, everlasting, immobile, unmanifest, immutable Brahma, they, too, come to Me."

But unlike men without wisdom, whose ego, senses of 'I' and 'Mine' and attachments are confined only to the body, the saint does not identify himself with the universe through his ego, or senses of 'I' and 'Mine'. His love for the universe is a pure love enlightened by wisdom. That love alone which is based on the ego, the senses of 'I' and 'Mine', attachments and personal interest is regarded as tainted love. To regard transient, destructible worldly objects as real, and the false pleasure derived from them as real happiness and thus love them, is love based on ignorance. The saint does not suffer from these two defects—that is why the love of that saint, the follower of the path of Knowledge, is both pure and enlightened by wisdom.

Q. When the occasion arises, can the follower of the path of Knowledge sacrifice himself, even as the devotee regarding the universe as God himself offers him and all his possessions with pleasure at the altar of sacrifice, when it becomes necessary for universal good?

A. Yes, he can do so. For, in the first place, in his view worldly possessions and the body have no value. Secondly, men, without wisdom treat them as valuable regarding them as sources of happiness. Therefore, what is the wonder, and why should any doubt be entertained that in order to make them happy according to their light, the man of Knowledge should sacrifice his possessions and the body ?

The follower of the path of Knowledge feels the whole universe as his own self, which is Consciousness itself. Therefore his conduct towards others becomes the same as conduct towards the self. Just as when during mastication the tongue accidentally falls between the teeth and gets hurt thereby, no one proceeds to punish the teeth, for he knows that both the tongue and teeth are parts of his body, there being already pain in the tongue, it was no use producing an additional pain in the teeth; even so the saint who is a follower of the path of Knowledge, because he regards all as his own self never feels inclined to punish anybody although he may be injured by the latter. If on any occasion such incident comes to one's notice, the reason for it also is love akin to love for the self. Just as in the interest of the healthy parts of his body a man considers his welfare to lie in submitting himself deliberately to the amputation of a diseased part, even so the saint also may be naturally found to be engaged in such activities for the good of the universe.

The truth and secret of the saint's universal love, as described above, is really very extraordinary and unusual.

He alone who is a saint actually knows them. The realization of the virtues, the inward motive of conduct, the glory as well as the reality of such saints may be gained only through cultivation of association with them, and through their service.

THE CONDUCT AND TEACHINGS OF SAINTS

Q. Is the conduct of such saints to be followed, or their teachings ?

A. Both their conduct and teachings should be followed. And not only their conduct and teachings, but everyone of their extraordinary virtues should be carefully lodged in the heart. It is only when any discrepancy is observed between their conduct and teachings, it is considered proper to give preference to their teachings. Although the saints' actions invariably conform to the scriptures, and whatever they teach or preach follow the lines of the scriptures, yet through ignorance of the truth and secret of their character, whatever conduct appears opposed to the scriptures should not be imitated.

Although such saints are not bound by any duty, yet they regulate their conduct according to the scriptures for the good of the people out of natural compassion for them. There is no reason for their indulging in any action which is opposed to the scriptures. But if owing to natural inclination for cessation of action, or lack of external consciousness, or for any other reason, they seem to be neglecting the observance of any obligatory duty enjoined by the scriptures, they cannot be compelled to observe the same, for they

have reached a stage which is beyond the regulation of obligatory and prohibitory rules of the scriptures. None can impose any discipline on them by saying, 'You have to do this,' 'You should not do this'. The saints' virtues and the saints' conduct constitute real virtues and right standard of conduct. His words, teachings and instructions are the same as the words of the Vedas. Who will lay down rules of conduct for them? Therefore, the conduct of saints is invariably worthy of imitation; but if any conduct appears to be of doubtful propriety or against the scriptures, the doubt should be cleared by questioning them about the same, or leaving that conduct alone, whatever appears approved by the scriptures should be imitated and followed.

Q. When the obligatory and prohibitory injunctions of the scriptures cannot be applied on such saints, why do they at all involve themselves in action?

A. They do so out of compassion for the people, and only for their good. God Vāsudeva also Himself comes down on earth as an incarnation and does action for the good of the people. He has instructed the saints also to do the same.

यथदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥
न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं निषु लोकेषु किंचन ।
नानवास्मवास्पत्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥

(Gītā III. 21-22)

"For, whatever a great man does, other men also do; whatever he does is for them the standard of action. O Arjuna, though there is nothing in the three worlds for Me to do, nor is there anything unattainable to be attained by Me, yet I continue to work."

According to this ideal laid down by the Lord, if the saint takes to action, it enhances his respect and reputation and leads to supreme good of the people. That is why benevolent activities are natural for the saint. Indeed, such a saint lives for the good of the people. Therefore, in order to become saints of this type, people should take refuge in the Lord and feel delighted every moment of their lives, realizing the grace of God at every step. Regarding God as the Conjuror, one should surrender oneself to Him like a mere puppet and act according to His directions and remember that every action of him who thus surrenders himself to God follows the line approved by God—in fact, this is the test which determines whether his surrender is a genuine one. Through the practice of this form of surrender one gets a direct vision of God's infinite grace and through that grace attains the state revered by the very gods, and supremely difficult to attain viz., the state of sainthood.

(Kalyan)



The Advaita Doctrine

BY R. KRISHNASWAMI IYER

1. THE AIM OF PHILOSOPHY

Even a casual observer of the world around him will see for himself that it consists of an infinite number of variety of factors which, however, fall automatically under either of two categories; the Experiencer and the Experienced. All experience assumes that there is some body who experiences and that there is something to be experienced. In other words, the phenomenon denoted by the verb "experience" requires and presupposes an entity who can figure as the nominative and another entity who can figure as the objective. The former is called the Soul and the latter Matter. Simpler still, the former is the *I* and the latter is *this*. The aim of all philosophy is to find out the essential nature of *this* / the subjective element, to find out the essential element of the *this* the objective element, and to find out the exact nature of the relationship between the two. Happily for us, Hindus, our philosophy is not an endless groping in the dark or a tangled network of guesses but is founded upon the firm rock of revelation, the Veda, the highest of all Pramāṇas or guides to right knowledge.

2. THREE EQUATIONS

The sublimest and highest peak of the Veda, known as the Vedānta, proclaims in unmistakable terms that the essential nature of the individual soul is Brahma (Ayam Ātmā Brahma) and that the essential nature of all Matter is

also Brahma (Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahma). If A=B, and C=B, then A must be equal to C. Is then the essential nature of the Individual Soul identical with the essential nature of the material world around ? Even so is the Truth, proclaims the Śruti. *Thou* (the essence of the Soul) art *That* (the Essence of the Universe). Thus the Vedānta philosophy deals in order with these three equations :—

- (1) I the soul is Brahma.
- (2) All this is Brahma.
- (3) Brahma the essence of the Soul is identical with Brahma the essence of the All.

The truth of the *first* equation can be realized if we ungrudgingly and mercilessly analyse the ordinary conception of the Soul. We started with defining the Soul as the Experiencer, the *I* in us. *Who am I?*—is therefore the province of this equation. The process of trying to arrive at an answer to this question is known as Pañcha Kosa Viveka, separating the real *I* from the five coatings which screen it.

The truth of the *second* equation is realized if we equally unhesitatingly probe into the essence of all things that are experienced. *What is This?*—is the province of this equation. The process of trying to get an answer to this question is known as Pañcha Bhūta Viveka, separating the substance of the universe from the forms created by the five elements and their combinations

which prevent that substance from being perceived.

The *third* equation equates the answer to the first question with the answer to the second question. Once the two processes above-mentioned are complete, it is not a far step to a realization of the identity of the real *I* with the substance of the universe.

3. WHO AM I ?

The question "Who am I" starts with the basic assumption that *I am*. Otherwise, the preliminary question "Am I?" will have to be answered before the former question can possibly arise. But nobody not even the maddest or the most ignorant among us, ever puts himself this question "Am I"? The doubt arises therefore only in the *Who*.

A doubt can arise when there is the possibility of two or more answers to a single question. The question "Who will win the race?" is possible only when there are more entrants than one. If only a single person offered himself for the race, there would be no race at all, much less any question as to the Who about the winner. Is there then many a candidate who offers himself as the answer to the question, *Who am I?*

We actually find that the Eye, the Ear, the Mind, the Body, etc., all claim to be the *I* severally in expressions like "*I see*", "*I hear*", "*I think*", "*I sit*" and so on. The *I* has a different significance in each one of these sentences but all the same we persist in using the single word *I* as the nominative in all these sentences. If the *I* is a seer, it cannot be said that that *I* hears. If the *I* is the hearer, it cannot be said that that *I* talks. The *I*

then, must be something capable of figuring as the nominative in all these sentences, without being subject to the liability of being confined for ever to any particular predicate.

I am reminded of a very telling and homely illustration given by the late Mahāmahopadhyāya Brahmarṣi Virupaksha Śāstri (later the Āchārya of the Kudli Mutt, Mysore State). Suppose you go to a distant village in search of a friend of yours. You see him squatting on the pial of the first house itself. He welcomes you and after a few minutes' talk with him you leave him there and go to the river to bathe. On your return from the river, you see him not in the first house but in front of another house. He welcomes you to it and tells you that that house also is his. After a few minutes' further chat, you go to visit the temple. On returning you miss him in either of those houses but find him quite at home in quite a different house which also he tells you is his. You are pleasantly surprised to know that he owns all these houses and, desiring to know the extent of his wealth, you ask him how many houses in all he owns in that village. "Why, all the houses are mine!" is his unhesitating answer. You at once realize that he is really homeless and owns not a single house there though he is able to freely move about in them.

So is the *I* in us. It assumes to itself, as occasion may arise, the function of being the nominative of any kind of predicate, seeing, hearing, thinking and so on. This extraordinary claim only brings out its essential pauperism, namely, that it is not really seer, hearer

and so forth. Really, therefore, the process of answering the question "Who am I" is the process of ascertaining who all I am *not*. In other words, the mis-equation of the *I* with many things who are not really *I* has to be got rid of, before we can realize what the *I* is.

As pointed out before, the world consists of two categories, the *I* and the *This*. The many things which are not really *I* but with which the *I* is mis-equated must belong therefore to the category of the *This*. Thus the need for an enquiry into the "Who am I?" arises only because of an antecedent mis-equation of the *I* with *This*. It is this *Mis-equation* that is given the name of *Adhyāsa*. The still further antecedent negative Non-equation of the *I* with the real *I* (Brahma) is known by the name of *Avidyā*. The aim of the *Vedānta* is to help us in the elimination of these two obstacles, one positive and the other negative, which stand in the way of our realizing our own Self.

4. WHAT IS THIS ?

Similarly, with reference to Matter, the enquiry into "What is This?" starts with the basic assumption that *This is*. Otherwise, there will have to be a preliminary enquiry "Does this exist?" The perception of anything, be it the most evanescent or the most illusory of things, coming under the category of *This is* impossible unless *it is*. The *Advaiti* does not, as some mistakenly suppose him to do, deny the existence of the universe. In fact, nobody in his senses can do so when every moment of our life it is so persistently making itself felt. The universe *is—is* the basic

fact on which enquiry starts. *What is it that exists as the universe?*—is the real question.

This question also is possible only because more answers than one offer themselves to solve the problem. Really therefore the process of correctly answering the question, "What is This?" is the process of ascertaining what all are the factors with which *This* has mis-equated itself. We find that the *This*, when it is not mis-equated with the *I*, is mis-equated with Name and Form, which have no real substance. This antecedent Misequation of the *This* with something which is really not *This* or has really no claim to be called *This* and which necessitates an enquiry into "What is This?" is known by the name of *Āropa*. The still further antecedent Non-equation of *This* with Brahma the Real Substance which is responsible for this mis-equation is called *Māyā*. The aim of the *Vedānta* is equally to eliminate these two obstacles, the one positive and the other negative, which stand in the way of our perceiving Brahma in the universe.

5. THE SUPREME POWER

As the conception of the *I* and the conception of the *This* are both relative and interdependent and therefore exist and disappear simultaneously, it is usual to club together the positive obstacles above-mentioned, namely, *Adhyāsa* (Subjective Misequation) and *Āropa* (Objective Misequation) and conceive of them both as the creations of a common Paramount Power of mis-equation, called *Vikṣepa Śakti*. When so doing, it is usual to club together also the corresponding negative ob-

stacles above-mentioned, namely, Avidya (Subjective Non-equation) and Mayā (Objective Non-equation) and conceive of them both as the creations of another common Paramount Power of Non-equation, called Āvaraṇa Śakti.

Inasmuch as Misequation follows Non-equation as the effect the cause, these two powers are again conceived of as a single Power which in its potential or causal state goes by the name of Non-equation and which in its kinetic or effect state gets the name of misequation. In this synthetic treatment of the subject, the name Māyā is reserved for this single Supreme Power. In its potential form it is called Āvaraṇa Śakti and in its kinetic form is known as Viśepa Śakti.

Generosity or the capacity or the quality of being generous is present in an individual always, whether at any particular moment of time he is actually helping another or not. When he is seen to be helping, his generosity is kinetic and is therefore perceived. When he is not helping, it is only potential and is therefore not perceivable; but it cannot on that account be said not to exist. Being a part of his nature, it is not distinct from him; we can never see generosity in the abstract apart from the generous person. Still it is not identical with that person for, unlike the person who is perceived whether he shows himself generous or not, his generosity is only sometimes perceived and at other times not. It is therefore not distinct from him and yet not identical with him. Such is Mayā, the Supreme Power of Brahma. She is not distinct from Brahma and yet not identical with it.

She makes herself felt when she becomes kinetic and at other times remains undistinguishable from Brahma. In the words of the Advaitī, Brahma the Potential is Śuddha (pure) and Nirguṇa (Quality-less); Brahma the kinetic is the Māyāvi (wielder of Māyā) and Saguṇa (Quality-ful). Strictly speaking, Brahma cannot be called really Śuddha or Nirguṇa when it is possible to postulate even that potentiality but to understand the subject it is not necessary to stick to such fine distinctions.

6. THE ABSOLUTE

The Supreme Absolute Truth is the pure Brahma transcending all limitations created by Māyā. But it has to be known only through the Saguṇa. Gold by itself has no shape or form of its own. This does not mean that it is impossible to know what gold is. We can never see gold unless it puts on some shape or form. This does not mean that gold is essentially shapeful or formful. On the other hand, we come to know what gold is, only when we see a large number of shapes which gold takes on on various occasions and when we have learned to dissociate those shapes from the essence of gold.

So with the Soul and with Matter. Note the ceaseless variety of forms which they take and learn to dissociate those forms from the essence of the Soul and of Matter. You will realize that that essence is One and One only. This is the teaching of the Advaita Philosophy.

It does *not* teach the absurd doctrine of the identity of *two* things. It simply denies that there are two things. It is misleading to call it Monism. It claims to proclaim only the impossibility

of enunciating two equally real verities. It is only Advaita (Two-less). It does not preach that the soul *and* Brahma are one, or that the universe *and* Brahma are one. It asks you simply to score out the false *and* which creates the sense of distinctness. When the *and* goes, the plural predicate "are" automatically disappears; and the need for postulating that they are "one" equally

automatically disappears. Only the nominative remains. But without a predicate there can be no sentence nor, in fact, will there be any justification any longer to call the nominative a nominative at all when there are no other correlated factors. The Supreme Truth therefore transcends all sentences, all words and all expression. Such is the doctrine of the Advaita.

Relation between God and Devotee in Divine Love

BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

What God's true form is, is only known to God, or partially may be known to him whom God may want to acquaint with it. Upto now there has been none in the world who could assert that it was positively *only* like this, none can assert it even now, and none will be able to assert so in the future. If there is anyone bold enough to make this assertion, he should be regarded either as a simpleton, a doctrinaire or a mendacious person. But while this is so, the descriptions of God found in the scriptures of the world are all true, so far as they go. For in the great Paramātmā all descriptions may be justly included, even as the space within a room or within a pot is included in infinite space. If referring to an incident taking place in a village we declare that such things take place in the world, the statement will not be incorrect, for the village is included in the world, although it is not a fact that the world is only that village. Moreover, a description of the world is possible, because it is a creation of Prakṛti, finite by nature and capable of

being seized by an enlightened and sharp intellect, whereas a description of God who is above Prakṛti, unlimited, infinite, boundless, without parts and transcendent is wholly impossible. That is why the Vedas cease all efforts at description of God after saying 'Not this, Not this'. Absolute, imperishable Brahma; Jivātmā—the changeless higher Prakṛti or Life-principle attached to mutable matter or the lower form of Prakṛti; Lower Prakṛti, and all things with beginning and end born out of it; Action in the form of discharge of energy which brings forth creatures and leads to their growth; the Puruṣa identifying himself as the Soul of manifested creation; and Viṣṇu residing in all bodies as the reader of the heart—all these are different aspects, or part manifestations, of eternal immutable God, the embodiment of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. True, though part manifestations, they are all as God Whole and Complete, because He is by nature Whole and Complete. Who can describe Him, the resider in every being, the governor and

substratum of all, the source from whom all derive their existence and power, the sole cause of all, beyond all, the all-pervading Being ?

The Lord said in the *Gitā* :—

मया तत्भिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्वस्थितः ॥
न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।
भूतभूच्च च भूतस्यो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥

(IX. 4-5)

"All this world is filled by Me in My intangible form, and all beings abide in Me, though really speaking, I am not in them. And those beings are not in Me; but see the power of My Yoga, though the supporter and creator of beings My Self in reality, is not in those things."

The statement of the Lord that He is in every being and yet not in them, that all beings are in Him and not also in Him, appears to be contradictory. Its significance does not easily become clear to the mind. Therefore, it is sought to be interpreted by making a distinction between spiritual knowledge (परमार्थ) and practical conduct (व्यवहार). But in this contradiction itself lies the power of God's Yoga—'My Yoga'. How can we understand it with the help of our gross intellect merged in and enchanted by Matter? Whatever is impossible in our case, is possible in the case of God. All contradictions are harmonized in God. That is why in whatever way God is described may be adjusted as a true description of Him.

God is both attributeless and possessed of attributes; formless and with form; He is Actionless, Absolute, Unattached and Supportless and yet He

creates, preserves and destroys the world, yet He possesses qualities, pervades all and is the support of all. What the Sāṅkhya describes as eternal Puruṣa and Prakṛti, Spirit and Matter, whose combination produces the world, is nothing but God's higher and lower Prakṛti or Nature. As a matter of fact, God is manifesting Himself in creation with the help of these two forms of Prakṛti. Though residing in all, He is above all. He is the Witness who sees all, He is the Guide who regulates conduct by His consent, He is the Supporter of all, the Enjoyer in the form of Jīva, He is the Supreme Lord, He is the Paramātmā who pervades all, and it is He, again, who is Bhagavān, the repository of all glory and sweetness. Although one and the same, He appears divided into many Forms. Although manifested as many, He is one and the same. It is He who is Manifest, Unmanifest and beyond even the Unmanifest, the Eternally Unmanifest Existence; Perishable, Imperishable, and beyond even the Imperishable, the Supreme Being is He. Distinguished by His own Glory and great by His own Majesty, He shines through His own effulgence.

True knowledge of this Lord, or His vision, cannot be gained without His grace. He alone can know Him who through His grace is acquainted by Him with the knowledge of His reality. And grace is revealed only with reference to the devotee. The Knowledge of the real form of God cannot be gained either by Action uninspired by Devotion, or Knowledge unsweetened by Love. Disinterested Action leads only to the knowledge of God's Majestic

aspect and wisdom brings one realization of Imperishable Brahma; but the Lord's Puruṣottama aspect or Integral Form is realized only through Devotion and Love. When through constant practice, Formal Devotion is transformed into Divine Love; when through knowledge of God's inconceivable power and indescribable majesty, the devotee comes to regard God alone as the final refuge, final support and final object of surrender and thus offers his all-intellect, mind, heart, senses and the entire body—at the Lord's feet; when he gives away his mind to the Lord, hitches his intellect to the Lord, surrenders his life to the Lord, speaks only about the Lord, chants the Lord's names and glories, remains contented with the Lord, delights only in the Lord; when he offers the Lord his body, mind, life, time, action, virtues, enjoyments of this world and of the next, and all objects of worldly attachment, craving and desire; it is then that the Lord confers on that devotee, who practises Bhajana with love, that divine intellect with the help of which he easily realizes God in His Puruṣottama aspect or Integral Form.

The Lord has proclaimed that no other spiritual practice can bring His realization as expeditiously as the practice of Devotion does—

न साध्यति मां योगे न सांख्यं धर्मं उद्दवं ।
न साध्यायस्तपस्त्यागो यथा भक्तिर्मोर्जिता ॥

"Practices of Yoga, Knowledge, Dharma, study of scriptures, penance and self-sacrifice cannot control Me as easily as does the practice of exclusive Devotion."

In the *Gītā*, the Lord says,

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेत्यया ।
शन्य एवं विषो द्रुं दृष्ट्वानसि मां यथा ॥
भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवं विषेऽर्जुन ।
शास्तुं द्रुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥

(XI. 53-54)

"O Arjuna, the chastiser of foes ! Neither by study of the Vedas, nor by penance, nor by gifts, nor by sacrifices, can I be seen as you have seen Me. Only by the practice of exclusive Devotion I can be thus known in reality, can be actually seen and entered into, i. e., I can get one absorbed into Me."

There is another point: In the path of Knowledge God is attributeless, formless, spotless, a supremely unknowable reality; and in the path of Action inspired by Knowledge He is the repository of all Glory and all virtues, the support of all, Lord of all, Creator, Preserver, Destroyer, the sole regulator and Master. But in the path of Devotion, besides being all these, He is the devotee's own in a personal relation. Bringing down God who is beyond the universe and beyond the modes of Prakṛti, and who at the same time pervades the universe and is the repository of all virtues, the path of Devotion binds Him with His devotee in the sweetest of relations. The practicant in the path of Devotion, the Love-intoxicated devotee does not know God only as Brahma, the embodiment of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, or the Supreme Lord of all the Universes, the Lord possessed of infinite Majesty and Glory, but realizes Him as his dear father, dear mother, friend and companion dearest to the heart, as husband, wife, child, the very breath, the life of life and the nearest of relations. God's transcendent

affection, wonderful Love, incomparable Grace, supreme friendliness, indescribable, eternal, divine Beauty, and ever-new sweetness can be realized and enjoyed only through the practice of Devotion—not through the practice of unalloyed Knowledge and Action. He who does not possess devotion can never form the notion even in imagination that God can be realized by him in the relations of father, mother, son, friend, associate or wife. It is Divine Love which compels God to come down on earth and appear from time to time as Divine Incarnations; it is through the glory of Love that the devotee tastes the sweetness of the transcendent sports of the Lord. And it is Divine Love which causes God to reveal before His devotee through His own sacred lips the Supreme Truth about Him, taking the devotee into His utmost confidence and hiding His glory from the world. To men given to argumentation without development of the devotional feeling, this Truth ever remains a guarded secret.

In His dealing with the Love-intoxicated devotee, God maintains no reservation whatsoever. For while sporting with the devotee, He has to withdraw the screen of Yogamāyā. Thus all truths stand automatically revealed before the devotee. God unravels before him the secret of both his states, viz., without attributes and with attributes, formless and with form. That is why the Lord praises the excellence of Bhakti in the highest of terms, and that is why even the cleverest of Ṛsis and sages cherish intense desire in their heart for the possession of Bhakti.

Not only so, God takes upon Himself the responsibility for the welfare of the devotee by bringing the latter whatever he requires and preserving the same for him. He plays with the devotee, eats, sleeps and holds loving conversation with the devotee. Now and then assuming the form of a human child He plays on the lap of His devotee-parents.

"All-pervading Brahma, stainless, absolute and beyond pleasures—That Unborn being forced by her love and devotion is playing on the lap of Kauśalyā."*

Now and then He enjoys a swing with Śrī Rādhā in the same swing:

"Swing Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa dear, Sakhis (female companions) slowly move the swing as they sing sweet songs."†

Now and then He bows to His parents and renders appropriate service to them—

"Raghunāth (Śrī Rāma), rising in the morning, bows to His mother, father and preceptor; With their permission He attends to the city's affairs; His character gives delight to the King's heart."‡

At one place He is engaged in sports with His friends, at another in addressing words of love to His beloved, and yet at another in weeping for His

* व्यापक ब्रह्म निरंजन निर्गुण विगत बिनोद ।
सो अज प्रेम भगति बस कौसल्या के गोद ॥

† द्वुलत नागरि नागर लाल ।
मंद मंद सब सखी द्वुलावति गावति गीत रसाल ॥

‡ प्रातकाल उठिकै रघुनाथा । मातु पिता गुरु नावहि माथा ॥
आयसु मागि करहि पुर काजा । देखि चरित दरषइ मन राजा ॥

devotee. Here He is engaged in the service of His devotee, there He extols the greatness of the devotee; here He proclaims the devotee's enemy as His own enemy, there He hears the grateful words of praise uttered by His devotee, and at another place imparts spiritual knowledge to the devotee. This form of play and mutual enjoyment takes place only between God and His devotee. Who knows what sweet words of Love are exchanged between God and His devotee, what mysteries are revealed by God to the devotee? And who knows when and to what an eminent divine region God carries the devotee and confers on him the privilege of enjoying its special type of bliss? He becomes the devotee's

own and makes the devotee His own. Occupying as He does the devotee's heart, He lodges the devotee in His own heart. Entire Knowledge, entire Self-realization and entire experience of identity is transformed in the devotee's case into Divine Love. And Salvation, or Mokṣa? In order to render service to such a devotee, Mokṣa follows his footsteps and rolls in the dust at his feet.

यदि भवति मुकुन्दे भक्तिरानन्दसन्दा
विलुठति चरणग्रे मोक्षसाम्राज्यलक्ष्मीः ।

"He who has attained the Supreme Bliss of Bhakti at Śri Mukunda's (God's) feet, the Imperial fortune of Mokṣa rolls at his feet."

(*Kalyan*)

Realization of God—III

(Continued from the previous number)

BY L. KANSHI RAMA CHAWLA

How far does knowledge help in the achievement of realization of God

It has been said before that no amount of knowledge is in itself enough to secure the realization of God. Knowledge can make us wiser and cleverer, but

not necessarily, nobler and purer. A man of knowledge can earn fame, wealth and respect in the world but its relative value for realization of Self is not so great. A man of knowledge can acquire proficiency in debating or become a good writer and a good speaker, but not necessarily a successful devotee. Knowledge can develop the faculty of reasoning and argumentation but it cannot grant real satisfaction to the mind.

On the other hand, knowledge can make us more vain, proud and ostentatious. The kingdom of heaven, however, falls to the lot of the meek and humble.

Knowledge may secure all worldly objects, but it cannot necessarily procure union with the Divine Mother. On the spiritual side it may be of some little help, but that alone cannot bring communion with the Lord, rather it becomes a hindrance, if it produces a sense of superiority over others.

There is not a single instance in history of a learned person having attained a vision of the Infinite purely by dint of his rational faculty. Sages who have realized the divine goal have done so not through their intellect, but through their devotion. We need not take into consideration instances of Prophets like Christ, Muhammad and the Bengali saint Rama Krishna, who could not make use of scholarship, for they were innocent of worldly knowledge.

We rather take the case of Imam Ghazali, a profound man of letters, who found at last that knowledge took him no farther than Nature, and he gained his ideal when he abandoned the ways of the intellect and betook himself to the life of a devout Sufi.

Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was a veritable prodigy of learning, which had to be unlearnt through a pious life of devotion and meditation in order to qualify for the crown of spirituality.

Swami Vivekananda was another embodiment of erudition, which would have driven him to scepticism, had he not had the good fortune to meet the Master, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, contact with whom wrought a miracle in that youth.

From these instances it is clear that on the spiritual path, after a certain stage, reason and knowledge are mere encumbrances which must be renounced in order to open the flood gates of the heart to the onrushing stream of devotional ecstasy.

Can a mortal, with his limited consciousness, have an insight into the Infinite? No. So long as he relies solely upon his intellectual faculty, he is forever debarred from so doing. The inner Life of our being is altogether unknown to the intellect. We cannot be said to know an object thoroughly by merely becoming familiar with all its attributes, qualities, potentialities and what not.

The most practical way to solve these problems is not merely to apply the intellect. We must first acquire mental tranquillity, we must be purified spiritually, we must be freed from all disturbing passions, prejudices and superstitions.

Mere talk, or mere belief in the existence of God and His infinite love is useless so far as religion is concerned. If God exists, His presence must be felt. If

He is Love, it must be experienced and must become a part of one's inmost life. Without the awakening of the religious sense, God is a shadow, the soul a ghost and life a dream.

It has been said in the Upnisads:

"If you think that you fully know Him, doubtless, you know Him only imperfectly. Even that much of Him which you know and which is represented by forces of nature, is fragmentary. Thus I conclude that what you have understood requires to be considered and investigated further."

"He is beyond the ken of eyes, as well as of speech and mind. We do not know Him, really. We do not know how to express Him. He is other than what is known and also distinguished from that which is not known. This is what we have heard from great men who have spoken to us about Him."

We should realize this fact and never depend on knowledge alone in the region of divinity. It can hardly take us far. On the contrary, it may make us miss the direct route. We should, therefore, make use of knowledge only so far as discipline for spirituality is concerned. Inasmuch as knowledge helps us to secure the purity of mind and nobility of character, it is welcome, but as soon as it begins to engender feelings of self-consciousness and pride, it should be discharged. It should therefore be taken as a means, and not as end.

Where shall we look for God, then?

Where to find God The answer is within ourselves. What about the great universe without? It is only a vehicle, a conveyance, an instrument to be used for this purpose; but the power to learn lies within us. We see the brilliance of the Sun and of the Moon because we have eyes. We understand the construction of the

universe because we have a mind. We feel the beauty of the pebble on the beach and of the cosmos of innumerable colours because we have beauty unfolding itself within ourselves. And finally, we realize the mystery at the heart of the Great Cosmos, because we have realized it in our own heart, each of us being a cosmos. All the powers of Nature, all the faculties seen in the universe belong to man; man is a miniature copy of the Universe; there is nothing in the Universe that is lacking in him. Man is the Deity in a latent form; man is God in the making.

Therefore, looking within ourselves, we shall ultimately succeed in arriving at the core of our own being, and we will then find that that core is identical in essence and substance, as spirit and matter, with the core of the whole of manifestation.

How to realize Now comes the question of actual realization. The method that applies to worldly objects is also applicable in the case of God. The mind by dwelling more and more on God, becomes inclined towards Him. Out of this inclination will grow an earnest desire to be with Him. With the growth of earnestness, the spirit of renunciation will dawn on the soul. The mind will then be drawn nearer to God and feeling His presence will be filled with spiritual love. Love will wipe out the memory of worldly experiences and when the mind ceases to dream of pleasures, real and imaginary, it will also automatically cease to discriminate between pain and pleasure. In consequence, the sense of Ego, the consciousness of the finite self, will be eliminated.

We feel the need of a guide even in our worldly affairs. A student requires a teacher to coach him. Possession of books alone cannot bring knowledge. The necessity of a preceptor

is all the more a necessity in the spiritual domain. This path is very difficult and this problem is much more complex than the worldly problems. One cannot find his way without the help of a true guide. Without a guide one may go astray or proceed in the wrong direction, and thus create for himself still greater obstacles.

One who seeks to get one's supreme weal, should take refuge under a preceptor who has mastered the scriptures and has actually realized the supreme Reality and has become the very abode of peace. One should give himself upto such a preceptor.

The preceptor should be such as has divested his mind of all *The qualities of Preceptor* worldly objects. He should be compassionate to all afflicted creatures, friendly to those of his own class and respectful to those who deserve his respect. He must have acquired the virtues of endurance, reserve in speech and devotion to scriptural studies. He should possess the traits of straightforwardness, continence, harmlessness, and equability in pleasure and pain and other pairs of opposites. He must have learnt to see the self as well as the Divine in all creatures. He should have acquired a retired disposition and must have no sense of possession with regard to the house and other property. He should not mind even if he has to cover his body with rags and the bark of trees and remain contended with whatever he gets. He must be practising truthfulness and restraint of mind, speech and action. Lastly he must love God more than everything else, even life itself. Such a guide alone can take one across the ocean of the world.

Numerous methods have been suggested by the holy scriptures of all the faiths for the realization of God. They are *Selection of the method of God-Realization* all good and useful. They are paths to the same goal. It is wrong to declare one superior to the

other. Paramahansa Ramakrishna tried most of them (including those of Islam and Christianity) with equal success, and he thus established this fact by actual experiment.

The difference in methods lies in the preliminaries and not in the end. The elementary diversities sometimes cause misapprehension and a difference is felt while there is none in reality. When the seekers after truth get at the point of realization, their condition is identical. They all perceive the one Lord pervading the whole universe. Different sects and faiths appear to be several paths leading to the same city. All men seem to be entering from different doors to find a seat in the lap of the Divine Mother.

They then find that the Lord is in everything and that every form is a form of His and that nothing exists apart from Him. They perceive that in every human being it is He who sees, speaks, hears and tastes and in every individual mind, it is He who thinks. They also feel that it is He Himself who becomes a snake to bite and then He appears in the person of a charmer to cure the patient. To such a man praise and blame, success and failure, pleasure and pain lose all their significance.

Those who quarrel over the question of ways, and busy themselves in hair-splitting arguments on the preliminary differences can never reach the destination. The devotees care little about the seeming differences. They look to the spirit and continue their march and eventually reach the common goal.

When a person finds the right path then it is not the path which is material to reach the goal, but the zeal and enthusiasm of the traveller which counts. In the same way, it is not the method which is of importance for God-realization, but the sincerity and singleness of purpose alone matter.

Countless ways have been suggested for reaching the goal. One should not however lose any time in discussing and selecting the method, but should take to one which is to his liking. Everyone of them will lead to the destined end. Once the start is made, the light within would show the way by itself.

Those who advocate one particular method as the only or the best, are labouring under a misapprehension. The state of everybody's mind is different.

There may be so many medicines in a dispensary, but one medicine will not do for all. Similarly there are thousands of precepts in the sacred books yet one method cannot suit all. Unless rightly prescribed, the remedy may prove worse than the disease.

For spiritual advancement, we should choose our own path and stick to it. Now this, now that—such wavering and changing will do no good.

We must not feel dejected or disheartened by the hardships and privations that we may have to encounter in the course of our meditation, but should continue the practice with an unruffled mind. The Lord Himself will make the path smooth for us.

No time should be wasted in discussing theories. We need not be anxious for a logical solution of the intricate religious problems but should adopt the line of thinking that appeals to us and strive on with sincerity. The time will come when all the mysteries will be unfolded of their own accord. To try to solve such problem before making any progress in the path of Divinity can be likened to an attempt on the part of an infant class student to understand the intricate theories of philosophy and economics. He must mind his own lesson and in the course of time all theories will become clear and easily intelligible.

One can gain very little if one is always in search of a single efficacious

method. Light can be gained by different appliances. Hence there should be no obstinate insistence on a particular method. Method is an instrument that helps the soul from without. Its selection without should entirely depend on the temperament and the peculiar circumstances of the aspirant. Sometimes traditional methods, not adapted to a particular case, prove great obstacles and delay the attainment of Light. The historic instance of Lord Buddha is highly instructive. For years together he persisted in following the traditional method of self-torture but to no purpose. However the moment he gave it up and changed his method of approach, the Light dawned upon him automatically.

No doubt, in the path of spirituality disturbances and temporary failures, discontentment and weariness, de-

Delay in having Divine Vision
jection and unwillingness may sometimes dishearten us. But at that time we should cheer up our spirits and should cling to our practice with more willingness and eagerness than ever. No doubt our progress sometime seems to be wrapped in a dark veil, but as we press on, that dark veil is cast off, and we are face to face with the Vision Beatific.

We are to get at Him by physical loss and to rise by surrender. Neither disease, nor any calamity nor any kind of temptation should cause us any alarm. We are to proceed with patience and perseverance. Cowards and waverers will fly away from the battle-field, and in after years weep in sorrow and hopelessness. Holding fast only to Him, we should boldly say that we are going to reach Him here in this very life, nay at this very spot, and at this very moment.

Man's progress in spiritual development lies through a series of self-denials. We must not feel annoyed if things fail to come up to our expectations. Rome was not built in a day. When a piece of cloth has to be dyed, the greater portion

of the time is spent in removing the dirt from it. Dyeing itself takes very little time. Similarly a good deal of time is taken in the purification of the mind and results cannot be apparent unless this is done. One must continue his practice without a break or a feeling of discouragement. It does not take long to press the switch and illuminate an apartment after wiring and fitting have been done. Similarly actual communion with the Fountain of Bliss does not take long after the preliminaries have been completed. It is done in the twinkling of an eye.

Patience and perseverance are very necessary. One should not avoid labour and covet ease in the course of spiritual aspirations. Love of ease forces man to forget God. Bodily comforts should not become the ruling factor in one's life. If one subordinates his higher aspirations to the cravings of the flesh he will feed fat his body but starve the soul.

Sincerity of purpose and clarity of vision are the only factors *Hypocrisy* which count in this undertaking. The spiritual aspirant neither indulges in self-delusion, nor does he try to delude the world. He with open eyes accepts all that comes to him and never tries to pass himself for anything better than what he is. Hypocrisy is another name for falsehood. It is an enemy hidden in one's own house that shuts out the Light. Again, the seeker after Light keeps his mind free from all prejudices. So long as the mind is pre-occupied with self-conceit, the Light cannot penetrate the heart. The sooner one rids oneself of presumptions, the nearer he is to the dawn of the Light.

All men cannot think in the same way. The line of thought depends on one's state of mind. Temperaments differ, intellects and modes of thinking differ, hence mentalities also differ. But this diversity is not material in the

Mental stages of aspirants

region of Divinity. What is essential is the capacity to continue the onward march.

One aspirant will like to realize God through service. He considers every living being to be the image of the Lord and believes that any service done to the meanest creature is service to the all-pervading Absolute.

Another devotee has no faith in service. Says he,

"What service can I render with my limited strength, insight and knowledge? Very often through shortsightedness I merely intensify the distress I seek to relieve. What appears to be harmful at first sight, turns out to be beneficial in the light of after events. How can I therefore distinguish between the undoubted good and evil, and, therefore, how to serve without knowing one from the other? True service comes from God alone, who is always providing for the needs of all living beings. Undoubted are His love and goodness. His knowledge and power are unlimited. He Himself makes provision for every individual creature according to his need. Man may or may not understand, but He is doing what is good for each and everyone. Why, impelled by pride, should I then, in the name of service, be intruding on His peaceful and well-established order? For one and all, He is making timely provision to meet all their requirements. Man's only duty, so long as pride does not wear out, is to devote his time to meditation on God. So one should only pray to Him, think of Him, and live in his holy presence."

The devotees have many other ways of thinking and beliefs too numerous to be enumerated. We must not look down

upon anyone of these different ways. Each one of them can lead to the destined end if practised sincerely and earnestly. We are at liberty to follow anyone that may appeal to us for the time being. The essential point to be careful about is that our mind has a natural tendency to run after pleasures of the senses. Whenever the wind is lured by any worldly object, we should bring it back and think of the Divine Vision. We should thus keep it plunged in the sea of eternal consciousness. If plunged, again and again, the mind will perceive a little of the brilliance of the Absolute and will then have nothing more to long for.

Ways of God-Realization It is very difficult to explain the different methods unless one has tried them himself. But everybody cannot be Parma-hamsa Ramakrishna who tried so many different methods to test their efficacy. When he was following the tenets of Islam, he dressed like Muslims, never remembered God by calling Him "Bhagavān" or "Paramātmā", but always used the Qoranic words "Allah" and "Rehman", said prayers in Arabic in a mosque five times a day, and so on and so forth. Similarly, while trying the principles of other faiths, he scrupulously followed their tenets and ways. Such a soul could, of course, expound all the different methods with authority. The writer is not in that enviable position but he will try to do it according to the best of his ability.

The foremost point is to adopt truth in one's life. God is truth and He loves the truth. Says the *Mahābhārata* :—

"Once upon a time a thousand sacrifices and Truth were weighed against each other in the balance; and the latter weighed much heavier than the former. Truth is the ultimate refuge. Truth is duty; Truth is penance; Truth is correct practice, and Truth is the eternal Bliss."

The scriptures have characterized God as omniscient, without a beginning or end, the controller of all, minuter than the minutest, the supporter of all, inconceivable in nature, all-effulgence, untouched by ignorance, pure existence, pure intelligence, pure bliss, and the very embodiment of knowledge. Thus God should be meditated upon in whatever form one conceives of Him. A vision of the real nature of God will dawn upon his mind as a result of this meditation. Should one find himself unable to grasp and meditate upon this nature of God, let him meditate on Him as something effulgent like the Sun. Sitting face to face with the Sun with one's eyes closed, one should focus his attention on the mass of lustre that presents itself before his eyes, and forget everything else. This is what they call the method of meditation on the effulgent form of the Absolute.

Another method is to draw before one's eyes, the mental picture of a particular Manifestation of the Divine and merge one's mind thoroughly in it, so much so that one should no longer be aware of anything except the object meditated upon, not even his own identity. One should make it a point not to quit his seat until he is thus able to concentrate his mind on the object of his meditation, to the exclusion of everything else, including himself. It does not matter much if such a state does not last for more than a few seconds in the beginning. When one is able to attain this state he will experience in his mind a peculiar kind of peace and joy, which will automatically attract him more and more towards meditation.

Every day, at an appointed hour, one should occupy a suitable seat in a proper manner and meditate on the Absolute. During meditation and at other times, one should repeat to himself the spiritual formula, ponder over its meaning and significance; hear how it

rings in the booming of clouds, in the warbling of birds as well as the patients' wails; listen how in the silent hours of night 'mute music' swells into waves and overflows the world. And if possible one should try to feel how even within the self runs an unbroken stream of heavenly music.

One should at all times and places feel the presence of the Blissful Lord. One should talk to Him, share his pleasures with Him, walk in His company and calmly realize how His love works in the lives of His faithful followers. While walking one should think that He is keeping him company. While reading he should feel that He is standing before him and listening to him. While writing he should believe that He is beside him and seeing whatever he writes. As one lies down for sleep one should think that He is looking on him with gracious eyes. Before commencing any work we should remember that He knows all our thoughts and deeds. As one sees any human form, one should recall that every heart is but a temple of the Lord we love and worship. At the sight of a garden in bloom one should think that there the Lord stands with the flowers scattered at His feet.

Other methods are:—

(1) To listen, to ponder over and read and recite the sweet, honey-like anecdotes illustrating the qualities, loving nature and greatness of God;

Other Methods (2) To associate with those persons who have faith in God and who love Him without any thought of earthly gain;

(3) To repeat and recite loudly God's praises with love, fixing one's mind at the same time upon His divine nature;

(4) To obey the divine laws and to remain cheerful under all circumstances, whether favourable or adverse,

taking them as a part of the divine dispensation;

(5) To strive for the good of all creatures, knowing them to be His creation;

(6) To be eager to grasp His true nature and to get His vision; and

(7) To pray to God, in solitude with tears of affection in one's eyes, with a frank and open mind, confessing all one's sins and weaknesses and praying for strength to get over all one's infirmities.

Yet there is another way to worship the Lord. We know how with flowers and sandal paste, etc., people perform external worship before images made of clay or stone or metal. Likewise with heart bedewed with love, we should perform our mental worship before images of the Lord mounted on the throne of our heart and adore Him with the flowers and perfume of whole-hearted devotion. We may freely offer to Him all articles with which we feel inclined to worship the Lord.

We should fully believe that the image, enshrined in our heart, is a living reality. With Him do we talk, to Him we pray and bend our gaze on Him, decorate Him gracefully and bow before Him again and again. By His permission, praying to Him for grace and for His approbation, do we perform our duties with care. In Him lies the highest good we desire. He alone is our preceptor; in Him shall we find our only refuge. He is our helper, our friend, one dearest to our heart. He is ever ours and we are His for ever.

Let our eyes always look up to Him. In Him alone should we place our trust. The temptations of the world do always tend to cast their spell on the human heart. Beware lest we should place any hope or trust in things that we find here; we should remember that this transient world is not our home during our short

stay here; in this caravanserai, we have to devise means which would help us to attain to immortal life. Very often opportunities come and slip away without our knowledge. Frequently we become aware of them when they are already beyond recall and when we have nothing more to do than to console ourselves with idle regrets for a few minutes. So we should be on our guard against such negligence.

The vision of that Supreme Being can only be had by the lamp *A formula in nutshell* of Knowledge (Jñāna or Gyana). It should have the wick of discrimination. It should be fed by the oil of contentment born of devotion. It should be fanned by the breeze of intensive meditation on God. It should be placed in the niche of pure consciousness evolved by the constant cultivation of self-restraint and other pious virtues. It should be held in the reservoir of the heart devoid of worldliness. It should be protected from the sense-objects, attachment and aversion. Lastly, it should be lit with the light of Divine Knowledge, engendered by incessant practice of concentration.

For a weak man journeying on the slippery path of the world, *Prayer* the staff of prayer is indispensable. If we feel our strength failing, if doubts and delusions assail us and weakness grows oppressive, we should pray with folded palms and upturned eyes, shed tears of repentance before the Universal Mother and supplicate Her for conferring Her grace on us and then we will find the dark clouds of despair rolling away, a balmy breeze soothing our heart and ourselves resting comfortably in the blissful lap of the Eternal Mother.

Prayer can work miracles. There is no safe in the treasure-house of God which the key of prayer will not unlock. Yet we should not pray for mere trash. Can there be a bigger fool than one who

on arriving in the presence of the King of Kings, begs for a handful of dust ?

We should pray to our Kind Master only for that priceless treasure which comprises the highest good of life, and which cannot be had from anyone else and which, if attained, will crown our life with peace and bliss. We should pray in right earnest and continue praying so long as our prayer is not granted. If we pray sincerely then our prayer is bound to be heard. We shall be blessed with the Love of the Lord and all our desires will be fulfilled.

But above all we should remember one thing and keep it always in our mind. Meditation, penance or austerity, even if continued for ages and centuries will not by themselves entitle one to the grace of God. We cannot win the favour of the Lord merely with our penance. It is only through His grace that we can find our way to Him. His grace is not conditional on our ability or otherwise. Says the *Kathopanishad*—

"The Divine Vision cannot be obtained by means of Knowledge, nor by intellect, nor by hearing too much. He alone can acquire it to whom the Lord extends His grace. The soul of that person alone reveals its own truth."

The belief that complete self-surrender shall win Him for us should also be weeded out. We may practise austere penance, resign ourselves to His will and look upto Him with implicit faith and trust, or we may adopt any other course—but unless we are blessed with His grace, we shall never find our way to Him. Whatever we may do, will be inadequate as a price for communion with One who is the embodiment of Supreme Bliss. So we should renounce all desires, lay aside all thoughts and rivet our mind constantly on God. By striving so, the mind will become purified, the knot of illusion

will be rent asunder, and in our heart the peaceful throne of God will have a firm foundation.

After realization the epithets, Father, Mother, Lover, Friend and others, applied to God, have no meaning. In all these relationships there is a veil of partition between God and man, however, thin, which the devotee can no longer endure. He must become one with his love; he must become love itself. The definition of love, in its highest sense, is that—

"It is the unbroken feeling of the Universal self in one's own self."

Here and here alone does the Personal become the Impersonal, here and not before does idolatry truly cease, here it is that Love is Light, and Light is Love.

Having attained Love, the devotee beholds Love and Love alone, hears Love alone, speaks of Love alone and thinks of Love alone. Worshippers, who have this one object in life, are the greatest of men. They make any work good work, and render the scriptures Holy. They are blessed with Divine qualities. Their families are purified. Their forefathers rejoice. The forces of nature on seeing them dance with joy. This earth finds protectors in them. They do not recognize any distinction of caste, creed, race or nation. Learning, beauty, birth, wealth, occupation, etc., have no meaning for them, because they are His. "In their hearts", to quote the words of a great Muslim mystic,

"surges the great ocean of Divine Love; the world present and the world to come are but figures reflected in it; and as it rises and falls, how can they remain unaffected by it. He who plunges in that sea and is lost in it, finds perfect peace."

The lamp burning indoors, within a small room, does in no way disclose to

an outsider its existence or its power to give light. Now open the door and the light will be diffused on all sides. Likewise when a man is released from the bondage of illusion, when the veil of ignorance is cast aside, his presence and power is sure to be felt and the light within him will illumine many others.

"The happiness that comes after this stage is free from all taint of sorrow, ignorance or transitoriness. It is infinite. Is it wise to think that that infinite bliss is confined within what we call ourselves and myself? The ocean can well be swallowed up by one of its tiny drops, the universe may be lost in an atom, but the great boundless, unconditioned and eternal bliss, called the self can't be crammed up within our little frame."

'Yourself' and 'myself' denote little, exclusive, differentiated and narrow things; for what is 'yourself' is not 'myself' and what is 'myself' is not 'yourself'. You call your mind and body 'yourself', but all notions of your being a body, an external thing, and all the wild goose chase of your mind must cease before the happiness of the self can be realized. So long as we think ourselves apart from others, we are little and fail to realize this infinite happiness. Let us give up our little self and the Great Self will stand revealed.

Selfishness is the greatest obstacle in the way of this high realization. It narrows down one's vision, makes one mean and diminutive, reduces one to the low level worm. How then could the infinite self be perceived? The higher we rise out of the opaque region of our little self, the nearer we are to the heaven of the Supreme Self. Charity and love for others will gradually lift us out of that low stratum. Let us train ourselves to love others better than ourselves. We

should sink our little self in the great ocean of love, wear it away to nothingness by constant exercise of charity, and, when by this holy exercise the little self is rubbed away, the great Self will stand realized.

Love is a precious balm, a sovereign cure for the disease of selfishness. It cleans our hearts, ennobles our understanding and edifies our whole nature. It transforms the beast into the man and converts man into God. Nothing is dearer to God than love. When all 'myself' is lost, when we become all love, then the highest enjoyment is at hand. Happiness, therefore, is identical with love. As God is love, so a man whose heart is full of love becomes absorbed in the Lord in the same way as a drop merges in the ocean.

Let us awake, friends, before death catches us unawares. And

Conclusion let us look into the deepest recesses of our heart, examine and search it, for it is there that the judgment of God will begin. Even if the greater part of our life has passed and nothing has been done so far, there is no room for despair. Of course, we have lost a good many precious moments of our lives. Yet why should we lose any more time in vain regret? Let our past follies serve as a warning to us. So may we learn to avail ourselves of the opportunities which the present and the future may afford.

Even now there are countless opportunities present before us that may help us on to the attainment of spiritual truth. Why should we let them slip out of the hands?

Our tongue is not benumbed—why should we not, even now, chant the sacred names of the Lord? Our ears have not lost the sense of hearing—why not hear the songs singing the glories of our Beloved? Our eyes have not gone blind,

then why should we not look at the winsome visage of the Lord, who is the friend of the fallen? Our hands are not paralysed—then why not employ them in His service in prayer and doing good to His creatures. Our legs have not lost their power of movement, then why not start to associate them with the holy saints and with the service of humanity. Our mind has not lost the power of thinking, then why not even now, devote ourselves to spiritual meditation?

Let us, therefore, sit in the most humble manner possible and with our mind absorbed in prayer say,

"O God! fill our hearts to the full with Thine eternal love, so that we may ever gaze upon Thy effulgent face and be united with Thy sovereign will. Chasten us a thousand times. If we transgress against Thee; forsake us not, O dearest Friend, without Thee, life is meaningless and void."

(Concluded)

Jan van Ruysbroeck—II

(Continued from the previous number)

By WOLFRAM H. KOCH

CHRIST THE SEER

"God who is the Lord of contemplation sees and works unceasingly. In his created soul, in his humanity Christ was and is the highest seer who ever existed. For he was one with that Wisdom, and he himself was that Wisdom with which one sees. Yet he satisfied all men outwardly in works of charity, and he beheld without ceasing the countenance of his Father. This is the nobleness of gifts:—to work and to contemplate and to remain unhindered as far as one can. Such are those of whom Christ says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." For not being deformed and perverted by earthly things and not caring for bodily pleasures, being equally virtuous and just and beholding that non-being in nakedness, the Divine Being Itself, they are blessed, for this is a Divine beholding."

(From *Dat Rijcke der Ghelyeven—The Kingdom of Lovers*)

THE SOUL AS A KINGDOM UNDER THE CROWN OF LOVE

"He who wishes to acquire the necessary virtues must adorn and possess and order his soul like a kingdom. The free will is the king of the soul. It is free by nature and still freer by grace. It shall be crowned with a crown that is called charity. This crown and kingdom one must receive, possess, govern and keep as received from the emperor who is lord and master and king of kings. This king, the free will, shall dwell in the uppermost city of the kingdom, that is in the God-desiring power of the soul. He shall be adorned and dressed in a two-coloured robe:—The right side with a Divine gift which is called strength, so that he may be strong and powerful to overcome all hindrance and to walk in heaven in the palace of the highest emperor and to bow his crowned head before the highest king with the dedication of Divine desire. This is

the proper work of charity. With that does one receive the crown and possess and keep that kingdom in eternity. The left side of the robe shall be a cardinal virtue which is called moral strength. With it shall the free will, the king, overcome all immorality and achieve all virtue and be able to possess his kingdom until his death. The king shall choose councillors in his country, the wisest of the land. They shall be these two Divine virtues:—knowledge and discrimination, illumined by the light of the grace of God. They shall live close to the king in a palace that is called the reasonable power of the soul. And they shall be clothed and adorned with the honour of moral virtue which is called moderation, so that the king may always do and leave undone all things with counsel. With the help of knowledge one shall purify one's conscience of all defects and adorn it with all virtues. And one shall with discrimination give and take, do and leave undone, keep silent and speak, fast and eat, hear and answer, and do all things according to knowledge and reason with a moral virtue called temperateness or moderation."

"This king, the free will, shall also place a judge in his realm who shall be justice. This is a Divine virtue when it comes from love, and it is also the highest moral virtue. This judge shall dwell in the heart in the middle of the kingdom in the irascible power (here Ruysbroeck means the 'vis irascibilis' of the Schoolmen). And he shall be adorned with a moral virtue which is called understanding. This judge, justice, shall travel through the king-

dom with the power and might of the king, and with the wisdom of his counsel, and the understanding of his own self. And he shall appoint and dismiss, judge and pass sentence, kill and let live, cripple, blind and make seeing, lift up and press down and order all things according to right, scourge and mortify and renounce all vice. The common people of that kingdom, which are all the powers of the soul, shall be rooted in humility and fear of God, subject to God and to all virtues, each power according to its proper use. He who has thus possessed and kept the kingdom of his soul, has gone out to God with virtues and with love, and to his own self and his fellow-Christians."

(*From De Ghcestelike Brulocht—The Spiritual Wedding*)

HOW GOD DWELLS WITHIN US

"God dwells within us in four manners, that is, in four qualities. God dwells within us with His own clarity, with His riches, with His union and with His essence. And if we turn lovingly inwards into the simplicity of our mind, we shall find these four qualities in God and also possess them. And thereby shall our mind be made imageless in four manners. Now understand me well. In the first moment in which we turn ourselves wholly and lovingly inwards into the simplicity of our mind, we meet there the unmeasured Divine clarity, and in it our understanding becomes as entirely loosed from the insight proper to it and as empty of all images as if we had never seen or heard anything at all. In the second place God dwells in the singleness of our mind in abysmal richness. And here in the

same loving inturning, where we meet the Divine clarity, we perceive this richness. And in this richness our mind is so detached and so empty of all will and all desire that there is nothing in heaven or upon earth that we need. For here we are united to the richness that is God Himself. Further in the same moment in which we recognize ourselves in the Divine clarity and in the richness of God, we feel the quality that is union, which God has made with our mind. By this union we are unattached so that no one pleases us and no one can please us by drawing us away. For in this union there may not hide or dwell any creature, and therefore we remain always alone with God and unattached in all things. In the fourth place God dwells in the singleness of our mind with His essence. And if through the Divine clarity and richness and union with God we let go of ourselves and gain all things and pass beyond all manifoldness and difference, we come into the simple nakedness of our essence, and there we feel the unmeasured vastness and the abysmal depth of the Divine Essence. And this is in our simple vision like a deserted emptiness wherein nevermore can come bodily or mental picture. These four qualities make in ourselves an imageless empty ground wherein God wishes to dwell and to remain eternally as in Heaven itself."

(*From Van den Gheesteliken Tabernakel—Of the Spiritual Tabernacle*)

WHAT IT IS TO POSSESS GOD IN TRUTH

"Wherein does the true having of God lie and that one truly possesses

God? This true having of God lies in the mind and in the intense intelligent turning of man towards God. Man must not be satisfied with a thought of God. For when this thought escapes him, God escapes him. That is why one must have an existent God established in very truth in the essence of one's soul above the powers who is far above the mind of man and of all creatures. He has God in the essence of his soul who can rise above himself and find God in himself above the operation of his powers. For there he finds a simple loving inclination in God without ceasing. And this inclination is nevermore hindered by any creature. For it is above all work of creatures and above love and grief and changeability."

"And as there is a simple loving inclination, there is a naked gazing beyond all difference into the naked truth that is God. And as this simple loving inclination cannot be hindered by any creature, neither by love nor by grief, it being above all changeability, the naked, gazing, simple eye cannot be hindered by images or by difference. For it is above all difference and images, for it has only God before itself. And as the understanding eye sees God in mental images as being compassion and goodness, the simple eye sees God naked, above all images. And as God walks in the power of the soul and reigns with His grace, He dwells and remains in the essence and the naked thought of the soul that is there, without intermediary and is one with God and with itself."

"And he who through the grace of God can rise above the operations of his own powers, finds God naked and imageless in the simple thought of his soul.

And there grace takes its origin and flows into the power, so that the soul through the help of grace may be able to rise above the operations of its powers to where grace takes its origin. And that is in God. For grace in its origin is one with God, but there where it flows, in our powers, and where we work with it, it is a creature."

"He who has thus found God reigning in himself with His grace and being and remaining with him above the operation of the powers, can remain unhindered by love and by grief and by the manifoldness of creatures. For God in His essence is established in him, and he is more fitted and inclined towards inturning than towards outturning."

"The man who has God in His essence thus established in himself takes God godly and in him does God shine in all things. For all things taste of God for him. He takes all things from the hand of God and praises God in all things. And in him God shines always, for he perceives God in great earnestness and does not turn himself knowingly and willingly towards useless things. As soon as he perceives himself to be turned towards useless things, he hurriedly turns himself away in great bitterness against himself, and complains to God that he is so unsteady. And he resolves never again to turn himself knowingly and willingly towards useless things. For everything is idle and useless in which lies neither the honour of God, nor the profit of his fellow-Christian, nor any profit to himself. He who thus watches himself, is hindered all the less. For he has his Beloved often before him, and this pleases him most."

"He who has a burning thirst, may well do something else than drink and may also think of other things than of the thirst that tortures him, but whatever he does and with whomsoever he may be, or whatever he may think or work, he does not forget the picture of drink so long as the thirst lasts, and the longer it lasts, the more does the pain grow in that man."

"He who loves a thing heartily so that nothing else is relished by him nor goes to his heart, wherever that man may be, with whomever he may be, or whatever he may be doing or beginning, it does not make him forget that which he loves so heartily, and in all things he does but find the picture of that thing, and thus it is more present to him the greater and the more powerful that love is in him. And for this he does not seek any leisure or rest. For no unrest hinders him from having the picture of his Beloved always present."

"Ah, my Beloved, so must God be loved by us that we carry the picture of His love present within ourselves in all our works, in all places, with all people, and in all things. For just as God is in all things, and all things are present to Him,—nay, far more present to God than they are to themselves—God must be present in our intention, in our desires and in our practice, in everything we do and leave undone, for He alone is the cause of all."

(*From Van de XII Dogheden—Of the XII Virtues*)

GOD POSSESSES BY NATURE, BECOMES
OUR POSSESSION THROUGH LOVE

"All the riches that are natural in God we possess lovingly in God and

God in us by means of that unmeasurable love which is the Holy Ghost. For in that love does one taste all that one may desire. And thereby, by means of this love, we have become dead to ourselves and gone out in loving outflowing into non-being and darkness. There the mind is in the embrace of the Holy Trinity, eternally indwelling in the supra-essential unity in rest and enjoyment of God."

(*From De Gheestelike Brulocht—The Spiritual Wedding*)

THE REVELATION OF GOD

"In the abyss of the darkness where the loving mind has died to itself, there is born the revelation of God and Life Eternal. For in this darkness there shines and opens out an incomprehensible light which is the son of God in Whom one beholds Life Eternal. And in this light vision comes. The Divine Light is vouchsafed to the guileless apprehension of the mind, where the mind receives the clarity that is God Himself, above all gifts and above all creaturely work in empty idleness of the mind, where the mind has lost itself by means of God-enjoying love and receives the clarity of God without intermediary, and unceasingly becomes that clarity itself which it receives. See, this hidden clarity wherein one beholds what one desires according to the emptiness of the mind, is so great that the loving seer neither sees nor feels anything in his ground, wherein he rests, but an incomprehensible light. And in accordance with the simple nakedness which contains all things, he finds and feels the same light with which he sees and

nothing but that. Blessed indeed are the eyes that thus see, for they possess Life Eternal."

(*From De Gheestelike Brulocht—The Spiritual Wedding*)

Unfortunately it is not possible in so short a space as this article to give an exhaustive idea of the wealth of Ruysbroeck's thought and spiritual experience, and the harmony he achieved between high flights of deep speculation and, as it were, workaday practicality.

Jan van Ruysbroeck is never the dry scholarly expounder of intellectual doctrines and theories about the religious life and the different mystic states but always the loving guide of his monks and fellow-men, who, before writing his treatises, had himself followed the path and attained the goal. And it is this which lends such a charm to his words and gives a timeless value to his teachings.

He knew as did all the great mystics, that without deep sincerity, longing, steady practice, and the grace of God, the highest union could not be reached. So in all his writings there is great stress on the life of the neophyte, clearly explaining its steps and pitfalls. The value of the teachings of the great messengers of God principally lies not in any newness of discovery or presentation, but in the impulse their words give to the earnest seeker to follow them in their quest and to realize himself the truths they struggle to explain through the limitations of human language.

As Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa has said, "Sadhana (spiritual practice)

is necessary for realizing God, for knowing an Incarnation. There are big fish in the tank, but one has to throw the bait. There is butter in milk but milk has to be churned. There is oil in mustard, but it has to be pressed. The fenugreek seeds reddens one's fingers, but they have to be pounded."

And the pounding must be undertaken by those who want to follow the

Great Ones, and can never be done for them by others. And it is this which for most aspirants makes the spiritual life such a difficult task.

May the Divine shower Its grace on the devotees, so that after the fight and the struggle and the curbing of their lower self they may all attain their heart's desire and realize the plenitude of life which is God.

Saguna Upasana—Bhaktiyoga

Archana Bhakti—in defence of Idolatry

By ATMANANDA

अग्निर्मूर्धा चक्रधी चन्द्रसूर्यौ
दिशः श्रोत्रे वासिवृताश्च वेदाः ।
वायुः प्राणे हृदयं विश्वमत्य
पद्मां पृथिवी ह्येष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ॥

"God whose head is the fire, whose eyes are the Sun and the Moon, whose ears are the directions, whose speech consists of the holy scriptures, whose breath is the air, whose heart is the universe and from whose feet the earth has evolved is crowned in the hearts of all beings."

(*Muṇḍakopaniṣad* II. 1. 4)

Smaraṇa Bhakti consists of remembrance or mental repetition of the sacred name of God (Iśwara). It is a matter of experience that when it is coupled with the simultaneous practice of Archana Bhakti, Smaraṇa Bhakti bears happy results much quicker than it can do when singly practised. In the present article we shall deal only with Archana Bhakti.

ARCHANA

This is one of the modes of the Nava-vidhā Bhakti, and means worship.

It is worship of God (Iśwara, Lord of the universe, crowned in Vidyā) by man (Jivātmā, a reflection of the Lord, bound in Avidyā) for his salvation (*Bhagavadgītā* XVIII. 62), and it is of three kinds:—(1) Ātmār̄chana (worship of the self), (2) Mānasa Pūjā (mental worship of the mental image of God) and (3) Bāhya Pūjā (external worship of an idol of God).

ĀTMĀR̄CHANA

The idea of worship first emanated when the abstract infinite eternal Divinity, the supreme Brahma of the Vedānta Philosophy, which consisted of absolute oneness, manifested itself in the course of evolution in the form of the universe containing in it the diversity of the worshipped (Iśwara) and the worshipper (Jivātmā in human life) with Sevya-Sevaka Bhāva between them, including other kinds of life. With the idea of worship emanated the idea of the form in which God was to be

worshipped. The universe with all the categories of life in it, provided the first grand form in which He could be worshipped. It was His Viśwa Rūpa described briefly in the above Upaniṣadic verse and in detail in chapters X and XI of the *Bhagavadgītā*. As the temple of God, it was much idolized by the greatest of His devotees, the perfected Jīvātmās, the Muktātmās or the Jivanmuktas, who alone could see and worship Him in it and in all the animate and inanimate objects in it. Man revered the prophets and saints amongst those great souls as the special messengers of God, come down on earth specially for the spiritual uplift of mankind. All religions, worth the name, on the face of the earth, have from time to time produced such spiritual prodigies in different parts of the world, under different names, at different times, with special missions assigned to them to help in the spiritual betterment of the human race. These great devotees worshipped God in their hearts (*Bhagavadgītā* XVIII. 61) in silence without the aid of an idol and therefore without attracting public attention. This was the analytic (Vyatireka) part of worship to the exclusion of the outside world including the Sthūla, Sūkṣma and Kāraṇa Upādhis of the devotees. Mankind constituted the God-made idols for the synthetic (Anvaya) part of worship which consisted of selfless service by the said devotees for the spiritual betterment of mankind. Other kinds of living beings also, as manifestations of the Lord, sometimes claimed the attention of the Mahātmās and had their share of service rendered to them. Such was the subtle kind of idolatry in

which the Mahātmās indulged themselves.

MĀNASA PŪJĀ

Great devotees of the kind described above have always been few and far between; they lived spiritually on a very high plane. Large numbers of men and women, aspirants to salvation (the Mumukṣus), who were spiritually on a lower plane than the Mahātmās, found the subtle form of worship practised by the latter, not suited to them; because they found conception of God in His abstract (Nirguṇa) state or even in His concrete universal form (Viśwa Rūpa) difficult and experienced the need of a man-made more concrete and finite medium which symbolized God consistently with the description of His forms given in the holy scriptures and in which He had incarnated Himself (or had revealed Himself to His devotees) at different stages of evolution to serve the spiritual needs of mankind. They sought the guidance of the Mahātmās referred to, as to the method in which He could be worshipped. Under their inspiration and guidance they started worship in a mode which suited them most; viz., that of the mental worship (Mānasa Pūjā) of a mental image of the Lord, of the most acceptable description, and succeeded in gradually fixing their minds on it in worship. This mental image was, so to say, the Pratīka (substitute) of the abstract Ātmā concentrated upon by the Mahātmās, adopted by the former for Mānasa Pūjā. This may be said to be the beginning of idolatry whose developed form has since been objected to by critics. The devotees eventually

succeeded in developing their capacity to form conception of God from part to the whole, *i. e.*, from His mental image to His glorious Viśwa Rūpa and finally even to His infinite formless (Nirguṇa Avyakta) state, when they reached spiritual perfection. The form of the mental image of God, with which they started Archana Bhakti, varied with the temperament or taste (principally based on the spiritual needs) of the devotees or groups of devotees concerned, to satisfy which He sent down his messengers (the Mahātmās) to, or incarnated Himself on, the earth according to necessity. This was the Vyatireka part of their worship. For their Anvaya part of worship (Bahya Pūjā) they had the whole creation which provided them God-made idols consisting of mankind and other kinds of life, whom they served with love and unselfishness as manifestations of God. Thus they too practised a subtle kind of idolatry; they as well worshipped man-made idols symbolic of God, principally for setting an example to others who had need of it. In the good old days, different people practised religion in different ways according to circumstances but all with the one aim of realization of God and were tolerant of one another's religious views and practices; they, if idolaters, could practise their intelligent idolatry fruitfully, unmolested by any body.

BĀHYA PŪJĀ

There had always been (and will always be) another class of idolatrous devotees of God, the Viśayis, who were after pleasures of the world, viz., the uncultured masses for whom Mānasa Pūja was difficult to practise, not to speak of

their inability to practise the more difficult Ātmār̚chana, owing to their unsteady minds and uncontrolled senses, but who were all the same blessed with sincere faith in His existence and in His superiority over the entire creation, who were earnest to earn His grace and above all who loved and feared Him, notwithstanding their small intelligence. They employed their minds in His worship as much as possible, besides this they took delight in employing their senses, *i. e.*, the body and speech as well in it; in other words, they tried to employ their subtle as well as physical bodies in the worship of the Lord. They had therefore as a matter of necessity to resort to an artificial medium to satisfy their thirst for worship of God, viz., a man-made idol (metallic, wooden or earthen) or a picture which symbolized Him. Their worship of Him, through the chosen medium, offered in their simple faith was therefore inevitably of the external type (Bāhya Pūjā); it attracted public attention but they experienced no difficulty in the good old days to practise it. Trouble came when later religions (as distinguished from the Sanātana Dharma of the Hindus) which did not provide for idol worship, found way into India and their followers who were not endowed with the virtue of religious tolerance for the faith and practices of idolaters, found in the idol worship practised by the Hindus, a cause for foul criticism and even persecution of the idolaters. It was due to ignorance of the so-called non-idolaters that they could not realize that even this Bāhya Pūjā of the idol was in reality nothing but worship of the all-pervading God who

was in it. The sincerity of faith and the intensity of devotion which marked the worship which the simple village-folk offered to the Lord were such, notwithstanding the medium of worship, viz., the idol, that a sight of it could not but attract admiration of an unbiassed person with a grain of devotion for God in him or her, who witnessed the function. This worship which began with a desire for fruit (*Sakāma Pūjā*) gradually developed into selfless worship (*Niṣkāma Pūjā*) and ensured the devotees' salvation. Such has been the happy reward even of *Mūrtipūjā* (idol worship). It is said that in Vedic times idolatry (as at present practised) did not exist and that it was an innovation of later times. Whatever may have been the fact idolatry seems to be an ancient universal institution at least amongst Hindus. Śri Rāma, in one of His talks to His brother Lakṣmaṇa, during their sojourn in the forests (*Dāṇḍakāraṇya*), recommended it for the benefit of the devotionally inclined masses, *vide Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa—Araṇya Kāṇḍa*. It might be questioned why even cultured intelligent people practised it and the answer is very simple. As leaders of society they realized their moral responsibility of guiding the masses, their ignorant co-religionists, more especially in matters religious and in the honest belief that idol worship, as an initial step was necessary for their spiritual uplift, and practised it themselves; and thus set an example to them and the rising generations, bearing in mind that example was better than precept. It was thus that idol worship became an universal custom amongst Hindus. Buddhism which prevailed in India

later, seems to have also supported it.

PAṄCHĀYATANA PŪJĀ

Mention has been made above of God's incarnating Himself at different times according to needs of evolution of the universe. His principal manifestations, representative of all His manifestations adopted by Hindus for worshiping the Lord are:—

(1) Gajānana, (2) Durgā (Goddess), (3) Viṣṇu, (4) Śiva and (5) Sūrya. Being five in number, they were called Pañchāyatana Devatas and their joint worship went by the name of Pañchāyatana Pūjā. Everyone of the deities had a happy message for the devotee. An intelligent devotee selected any of the five deities for worship according to the promptings of his heart and being aware that all the five were manifestations of the same God and that their worship, joint or separate, reached Him, he tolerated the faith of others in any other manifestation of the Lord. The particular manifestation of God worshipped by a devotee was called his *Iṣṭa Deva*.

A HAPPY REFORM IN IDOL WORSHIP

Such was the freedom enjoyed by people in ancient times in their choice of the manifestation of God and the mode of His worship; but trouble arose amongst the different classes of Hindu worshippers themselves when due to the growing ignorance of the people regarding the purpose of idol worship, every group of devotees claimed superiority for its own *Iṣṭa Deva* over those of others and the different groups quarrelled among themselves to the detriment of

religious peace in the country and their own spiritual welfare. Śrī Śankarāchārya of revered memory then appeared on the scene, quite in time, to save the situation. He succeeded in convincing the contending groups that the object of their worship was the same Lord of the universe, though worshipped through different manifestations of His, in different modes. He was thus able to effect a happy compromise by instituting the Pañchayatana Pūjā at which idols symbolizing *all* the five aspects of Divinity were worshipped together, prominence being given to the devotees' own Iṣṭa Deva. Śrī Śankarāchārya could thus restore the much needed religious peace in the country without allowing the situation to develop into bloodshed. Thereby he also made matters easy for his life's mission of restoring monism (Advaitism) to its pristine place. It is said that for the great service rendered by him to the large Hindu community he was by common consent called "Sanmata-Sthāpanāchārya". Though a Vedāntist himself and above the need of an idol for worship of God, he did not despise idol worship but on the contrary introduced a much needed reform in it, because he was aware that such worship though only an initial step in the ladder of Bhakti was quite indispensable to large sections of people in the early stages of their spiritual development.

JUSTIFICATION OF IDOL WORSHIP

Idolatry of some sort, very subtle in some cases, had thus always been practised since Divinity manifested itself in the duality of the worshipped and the worshipper. It consisted of stages and the first of them, viz., the Bāhya Pūjā of

idols was always and is still looked upon as the initial but essential stage in Archana Bhakti. It was something like a sign post on the roadside which directed the traveller to his destination and as such was most useful and necessary at the particular stage of the journey and not farther. It was however left standing there in consideration of its utility to the travellers that might follow by the same path. Similarly idol worship became unnecessary when better enlightenment was achieved; but was not necessarily dropped, considering its utility for setting an example to the rising generations. Thus it was always considered a means to a higher stage and never regarded as an end in itself. Some sections of people, ignorant of these facts condemned idolatry on the plea that the worship of the infinite, eternal God through the medium of a finite perishable idol was wrong; and when possible they even harassed people who practised idol worship. They forgot or were ignorant of the fact that God was present in the idol worshipped as He pervaded the universe and that He could be worshipped in the idol just as He could be in the universe, His glorious Universal Form. A thought of something is generally a mental idol of that very thing and few people, idolaters or non-idolaters, in this world are free from such thoughts. When an object, out of sight, is thought of, its form which presents itself to the thinker's mind is a mental idol of it. In fact, idolatry in its subtlest sense can almost be said to be a part of the man's being and those who disown it deceive themselves as being non-idolaters. If idolatry, in its

strictest sense, could be done away with, there could have been no quarrels about places of worship which we see so often between followers of different religions in which the so-called non-idolater communities very often take the initiative; the custom of devotees having to face a particular direction when offering prayers would have been meaningless because believers knew that God was all-pervading and that therefore He was everywhere; raising of tombs for the departed souls would have been an act of silliness; old paintings and statues in memory of revered persons would have been merely waste of money; Panjā worship during moharram, use of crescent on flags, caps and mosques and fixing up of the holy cross on towers of Christian temples would have been a baseless superfluity. All these customs and others have been practised by the so-called non-idolaters from time immemorial and are being practised even to this day. They certainly indicate the idolatrous spirit of the people concerned, though they may be unaware of it. The customs seem to have their own symbolic values and their own messages to convey only to those who can understand them. Further, photography is an innovation of the modern times. It is patronized largely by the present day educated people, the victims of a Godless education, including those who boast themselves as non-idolaters; and it is a common practice with them to get themselves and the people in whom they are interested photographed and to possess and respect photographs of absentee relations and friends whom they respect and love. This is certainly a form of idolatry

though sentimental and in the material field; and is practised by people irrespective of their country, religion and attitude towards idolatry in the field of practical religion. Idolatry being thus permissible to educated people for their short-lived imaginary material satisfaction, it ought in fairness, to be tolerated by society when practised by people for their real lasting spiritual benefit. Condemners of idol worship ignore the all-pervading aspect of divinity and its consequent presence in the idol worshipped. In other words, they overlook the fact that behind the idol used as medium of worship there is a great ideal, viz., the infinite, eternal, formless, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God, who is the real object of worship. Therefore no great explanation is needed to enable one to understand that the idol worshipped simply symbolizes God whom the worship reaches. Who can deny it, considering that behind a photograph, a statue or a tomb, there is essentially the sacred memory and the mental image of some revered object or a beloved person? In spite of all the objections raised against idol worship, on serious thought, one cannot help admiring the greatness of religions to which the institution owes its existence and the honest and persevering faith of their followers who have practised it in spite of opposition. Non-idolaters are welcome to their belief; believers in idolatry need not mind them; they have neither cause to be ashamed of their religious faith. Religious toleration is an essential virtue of civilized life; those who disregard this great virtue, or do not possess it, cannot honestly be regarded to

have risen high in the scale of civilization.

Idolatry has stood the test of time and age-long attacks of the so-called non-idolaters because it has been founded on sound principles and when practised with proper understanding has contributed to the spiritual growth of the devotees. Idols and pictures of God and saints coupled with knowledge of their history and underlying symbolism have great messages for qualified Sādhakas, e. g., the sight of the picture of Śrī Rāma would remind them of His great virtues which they themselves would imbibe, as far as possible. Such awakening has often brought about happy changes in the lives of devotees. This explains the custom obtaining amongst people who practise Archana Bhakti, of decorating the worship room with pictures of God and saints. Therefore those who condemn idolatry carry a great responsibility on their head of the immense harm they do generally to the idolatrous masses and specially to Sādhakas by shaking their faith or disturbing their spiritual growth.

In support of idolatry we cannot do better than quote Carlyle, a Christian philosopher and writer, who gave serious thought to this great subject a century ago. He has expressed himself in the following words :—

"Idol is Eidolan, a thing seen, a symbol. It is not God, but a symbol for God; and perhaps one may question whether any benighted mortal ever took it for more than a symbol. I fancy he did not think the poor image, his own hands

had made, was God; but, that God was emblemed by it, that He was in it some way or the other. Now in this sense one may ask, is not all worship whatsoever a worship by symbols, by Eidola or things seen; whether seen, rendered visible as an image or a picture to the bodily eye or visible only to the inward eye, to the imagination, to the intellect, this makes a superficial but not a substantial difference. It is still a thing seen, significant of Godhead, an idol. The most vigorous Puritan has his confession of faith and intellectual representation of divine things and worships thereby. Thereby worship was first made possible for him. All creeds, liturgies, religious feelings are, in this sense, things seen. All worship whatsoever must proceed by symbols, by idols. We may say that idolatry is comparative and the worst idolatry is more idolatrous."

(*Vide Chapter on Symbolism in Sartor Resartus*).

It is clear that Carlyle meant that idolatry, without a proper understanding of the underlying symbolism, was useless. It follows therefore that what is condemnable is not idol worship itself, but ignorance of the symbolism underlying the idol. We sincerely believe that it was this kind of degenerate idolatry which confined itself more to the form (idol) than to God in it that was condemned by the Revered Prophet of Arabia, when he prohibited the practice to his followers. We cannot persuade ourselves to believe that, tolerant as he was believed to have been of other peoples' faith, he would attack idol worship as practised by the

Hindus, which fostered the spirit of devotion to the Divine Spirit symbolized by the idol worshipped. Guru Nanakadeva, when he condemned idolatry as a part of religion showed great tact in dealing with the subject. His statement was quite consistent from the point of view of Ātmār̚chana which was exempt from the form of idolatry that offended the Muslims. The gratitude of the Hindus is therefore justly due to the great Guru for what little of Hinduism has been preserved in the North.

CONCLUSION

Bhāya Pūjā, Mānasa Pūjā and Ātmār̚chana are thus three successive steps in the ladder of Archana Bhakti. Bhāya Pūjā is, of course, open practice of idolatry, which the so-called non-idolatrous people have never been able to tolerate. Even Mānasa Pūjā and Ātmār̚chana, so to say, involve a sense of idolatry, of a very subtle nature, though haters of idol worship could have no knowledge of it.

So long as the duality of the worshipped and the worshipper lasts, idolatry of some sort is inevitable, whether non-idolaters will admit it or no. It is one of the modes in which manifested God (Iśwara) has always been worshipped and is the safest to practise. Worship of the Unmanifest is difficult for most people (*Bhagavadgītā* XII. 5). Therefore we, who are happily idolatrous by birth right, will be well advised to persist in the practice of this our ancient mode of worship of the Lord till we can do something better to ensure our spiritual goal.

The ancient practice of Archana Bhakti is based on the holy scriptures and definite conclusions arrived at by the hoary seers guided by their own valuable experience. The discipline laid down by them may for our purpose be called the Technique of Devapūjā which has been already dealt with in another article in this journal.*

So long as a person is alive he is addressed by people with the honorific title of Lord (Deva), such as lord of men (Naradeva), lord of the earth (Bhūdeva), etc., but that very person when dead is reduced either to worms or to ashes, or if the body is eaten by animals to ordure of animals. Does the person who for the sake of this body commits crime against his fellowmen, and paves the way for Hell, know his true self-interest ?

—Devarṣi Nārada.

The frequency of movement of man's mind does not cease till it has acquainted itself with Śri Rāma's sacred feet. Those who go from door to door adopting the mendicant's dress and yet do not possess Love of God waste their birth as human beings.

—Rahim.

* Vide *Kalyana-Kalpataru*, January 1941.

The Later South Indian Vaishnava Saints—III

(Continued from the previous number)

By K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

SRI VEDANTA DESIKA

Sri Vedanta Desika was born in Thooppil, a suburb of Conjeevaram, in 1268 A. D. He was the son of Anantasuri and Totaramma. He was born after his parents went on a pilgrimage to Tirupati and was hence named Venkatanath. It is said that he was the incarnation of the bell of God. He was taught by his maternal uncle Appillar and became a learned scholar and took up his abode at Tiruvahindrapuram, near Cuddalore, for some years. He was such an expert in all the lore of his day that he came to be known as Kavi Tarkika Keśari (the lion among poets and logicians), Sarvatantra Swatantra (master of all arts), and Vedanta Desika (the teacher of Vedānta). His clarion call to his generation to walk in the ways of righteousness and godliness was heard far and wide and he was therefore regarded as an incarnation of the Divine Bell. In his prologue to his great drama *Sankalpa Suryodaya* he gave some currency to this view and stated that the wise men used to say that his birth was as if it was the incarnation of the divine bell sounding far and wide and striking terror into the hearts of the enemies of God.

In India hero-worship always takes the form of calling a man as a divine incarnation. We find this trait not only in the biography of Sankaracharya but also in the biographies of later

religious teachers down to Sri Rama-krishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. Maxmuller calls this mental trait as "the dialogic process". It need not be frowned upon by the modern critical mentality, though it is true that the human interest of the lives of great men will be heightened if we look at them from purely a human point of view. A certain measure of acceptability was given to the traditional mental attitude by Chapter X of the *Gitā* where it is said that whatever or whoever shows splendour or auspiciousness or power is a Vibhuti (special manifestation) of God, though all beings are rays from the central divine Sun. It becomes a source of weakness only when each sect tries to demolish the incarnation theories of the others and even goes so far as to say that the protagonists of other faiths were incarnations of demons!

He married Tirumangayar before he went to Tiruvahindrapuram now called Tiruvendipuram. He composed when he was at Tiruvahindrapuram the following works. *Achyuta Sataka* in Prakṛta, *Paramatha Bhanga* in Tamil, and *Gopala Vimśati* in Sanskrit. It is said that at Tiruvahindrapuram he meditated upon the Garuḍa Mantra and that Garuḍa taught him the Hayagrīva Mantra and that then God Hayagrīva appeared before him and initiated him in the highest lore of the spirit. Among his other works are *Devanayaka Pancha-*

sat, *Raguviragadya*, etc. The total number of his works exceed a hundred and all of them have not been fully published as yet.

He then returned to Conjeevaram. The period of his life there was one of phenomenal religious and literary activity. He wrote *Varadarāja*, *Panchasat*, *Nyāsadasaka*, and many works in Tamil verse and prose. He then went to Tirupati and composed there the famous poem *Dayātataka*. He then went to Vijayanagar and there met and became the friend of the great Vidyaranya. The Vijayanagar king's daughter was possessed by an evil spirit. Desikar would not stay to cure her though pressed by Vidyaranya to do so. He went from there on pilgrimage to Muttra, Brindaban, Ayodhya and Benares. He then went to Puri, Sri Kurma, Ahobilam and Tirupati and eventually reached Conjeevaram. Vidyaranya who had meantime helped to found the kingdom of Vijayanagar and had great influence with the king sent word to him saying that if he came to Vijayanagar the king would give immense wealth to him. Desikar sent to him a spirited reply in five famous verses which breathe the finest spirit of independence of man and dependence on God.

He then went to Srirangam and took up the work of the defence of the Viśiṣṭādvaita system of philosophy against all attacks upon it. He wrote *Tattvaṭīkā* which is a commentary on the *Śrī Bhāṣya*, *Tātparya Chandrikā* which is a commentary on Sri Ramanuja's *Gitā Bhāṣya*, *Satadushani*, *Tattvamukta Kalapa* and *Nyāya Siddhāñjana*. He wrote also *Śeṣvara*

Mimāṃsā which is a commentary on the Sūtras of Jaimini and in which he tried to prove that Jaimini was not an agnostic as is generally believed but was a believer in God. In his *Adhikarana-saravali* he summarized the topics discussed in Vyāsa's *Vedānta Sūtras*. He wrote also the great Tamil work named *Rahasyatrayasāra*.

As stated above, his works are more than a hundred in number and cover a vast variety of subjects. He wrote a beautiful poem on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's life called *Yādavābhūdaya* (which has a commentary by the great Advaita teacher Appayya Dixitar) an allegorical drama in ten acts called *Sankalpa Sūryodaya* which is a counterblast to, as well as an imitation of, the famous *Prabodhachandrodaya* of Krishna Misra, *Hamsa Sandeśa* which is an imitation of Kalidasa's *Megha-sandeśa*, *Paduka Sahasra*, *Subhasitanur*, *Sristuti*, *Bhustuti*, *Dasavatara Stotra*, *Satcharitrarakṣā*, *Dravidopanisadsāra*, *Gitārtha-saṅgraha-rakṣā*, *Samasyā-sahasri*, *Tattva-sandeśa*, *Rahasya-sandeśa* *Silpa-rtha-saṅgraha*, etc.

Among other incidents in his life may be mentioned the incident to the effect that in the contest between Vidyaranya the leader of Advaitism and Akṣobhya the leader of Dvaitism he was the referee and decided in favour of the latter. It is stated that he met and defeated Krishna Misra and wrote *Sankalpa Sūryodaya* in answer to Krishna Misra's *Prabodhachandrodaya*. If, as is now held, Krishna Misra belonged to the 11th century A. D. this story must be deemed to be apocryphal.

It is said that he composed *Yādavā-bhyudayam* to humble the pride of Dindima who composed *Rāghavā-bhyudayam*. It is stated also that he composed *Padukasahasram* during one night in a contest with Alagiamanavalā Perumal who competed with him to finish 1000 verses in one night, 1000 verses called *Pādahamalasahasram*, but was able to compose only 300 verses. It is also said that when a bricklayer challenged his little Sarvatantra-swatana, he dug and built a well at Tiruvahindrapuram to show his proficiency in that art as well. It is stated further that he once vanquished a snake-charmer in the latter's art.

About 1312 A. D. or 1326 A. D. Malik Kafur invaded Srirangam and massacred a large number of Vaiśnavas. The idol of Sri Ranganatha was carried away secretly to Madura. For nearly forty years the districts of Trichinopoly and Madura were under Mahomedan rule. After the Vijayanagar Empire rose, Kampanna assisted by Gopanna, restored the Hindu dominion there. The idol of Sri Ranganatha had in the meanwhile been taken to Tirupati. Gopanna brought it to Jinjee and then restored it to Srirangam. The restoration is recorded in an inscription in the eastern wall of the Srirangam temple. The chronogram which precedes the Sanskrit verses in the inscription refers to Bandhupriya Sakabde, i. e., in the Śaka year 1293, i. e., 1371 A. D. Desika went with his followers to Mysore when the Mahomedan invasion came. From there he went to Satyamangalam. He refers to the invasion in his *Abhīti Stava*. It is said that he returned with joy when he heard the happy

tidings about the restoration of the idol. It is well-known that he died in 1369 A. D. (17 Karthigai, Saumya). This date does not fit in with the year of the restoration of the idol, i. e., 1371 A. D. Very probably the restoration of the idol was a few years before 1371 A. D.

MANAVALA MAHAMUNI

I have referred above to Parasara Bhatta, the son of Kuresa Bhatta. He was born about 1074 A. D. and was one of the great teachers of Vaiśṇavism. He defeated in controversy a famous Advaita scholar of Mysore, Vedanti by name, and converted him to his cult and gave him the name of Namjiyar (our Jiyar). He was the author of the commentary known as "The Nine Thousand" on the *Tiruvoimozhi*. His disciple was Nampillai whose disciple was Vadaku Tiruvedhi Pillai. The latter was the author of the commentary called "The Thirty-Six Thousand" which is an extensive commentary on the *Tiruvoimozhi*. Another pupil of Nampillai was the famous Periavachan Pillai, who wrote learned and vast commentaries on the *Tiruvoimozhi* and other works. Another disciple was Pillailokacharya who was a son of Vadaku Tiruvedhi Pillai and who wrote in Manipravalam (Sanskritized Tamil) *Śrī Vachana Bhūṣāṇa* and *Tattva Trayā*. The Manipravalam style made the Tamil language hideous but helped to popularize Sanskrit philosophical ideas in a new and dynamic manner. Pillai Lokacharya was the real founder of the Thengalai sect. He taught the doctrine of Acharya Prapatti (self-surrender to the Acharya) as being the all-sufficing means of salvation. He

taught also that even the sins of men are agreeable in the eyes of God and magnify His voluntary and condescending and causeless grace. He rejected with scorn the idea of superiority in caste among the lovers of God. A similar evolution is perceptible also in Northern Vaiṣṇavism which was taught and preached and spread in North India by Ramananda, Chaitanya and others.

The chief protagonist of the Thengalai school is, however, Manavala Mahamuni. He was born near Alvar Tirunagari, in the Tinnevelly District about 1370 A. D. His teacher was named Sri Sailesa or Tiruvoimozhi Pillai and was a great teacher of the Tiruvoimozhi hymns. He settled in Srirangam and composed many works and attracted many followers and disciples. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and Tamil. His Sanskrit *Yatirājavimśati* is a fine poem in which he introduces in Sanskrit verses the peculiar alliteration and assonance or head-rhyme found in Tamil prosody. His Tamil works are *Upadeśaratnamāla*, *Arthiprabandha*, etc. One of his chief disciples founded the Vānamālai Mutt in the Tinnevelly District.

SRI MADHWACHARYA

Mādhwa Vijaya and *Mani Mañjarī* are our only sources of information regarding the life of this great religious leader. *Mani Mañjarī* is a mere product of sectarian bigotry which was aimed at smashing Sri Sankaracharya by calling him an incarnation of the demon Maniman. The former was written by Pandit Narayanacharya and is as un-critical as the lives of the other Acharyas in South India.

In the village of Belle called Pajakā-kshetra, which is six miles to the south-east of Udupi there lived a Brahman named Madhyageha Bhatta. He married Vedavati. He had two sons and a daughter. His two sons died. Afterwards in 1199 A. D. a son was born to him. This son was the future Sri Madhwacharya. He is regarded as the incarnation of God Vāyu who is the son of God Viṣṇu and who incarnated before as Hanumān and as Bhīma.

He was named Vasudeva. He was a strikingly handsome boy full of fun and frolic and spirit. He excelled in running, jumping, wrestling, swimming and other manly games. He excelled also in his Vedic and Sastraic studies and showed a wonderful precocity of genius even in his early years.

In course of time he became the disciple of an Advaitic Pandit named Achyutapreksha. He became full of the spirit of renunciation of the world and resolved to take to holy orders. When his father came to know of his intention, he tried all means from command to entreaty to change his resolve but in vain. It is said that carried away by his excessive affection for his son and pained beyond measure by his son's resolution to become an ascetic, he fell at his feet and requested his son to come back. The son replied: "You have prostrated before me though you are my father. Such an honour is due only to ascetics. Madhyageha then besought him not to forsake his filial duty. Vasudeva then said that another son would be born to Madhyageha and that after that he would take up Sannyasa (the ascetic stage of life). Later on another

son was born to Madhyageha. The child later on became the famous Viṣṇu Tīrtha who was the founder of Sodai Mutt. Vāsudeva then obtained the reluctant permission of his parents to don the orange robe.

Tradition says that Vāsudeva entered the ascetic order in his 11th or 12th year. He was named Pūrṇa Prajña by his Guru Achyutapreksha. Later on the latter gave him the name Ānanda Tīrtha. On another occasion the title of Anumāna Tīrtha was bestowed on him. He afterwards went on a tour in South India to Trivandrum, Rameswaram and other places. He then went on a North Indian tour to Badari. It is said that he met Vyāsa at Badari and learnt the spiritual truths from him. Wherever he went he was victorious in his controversies and the public hung on his inspired lips.

Sri Madhwa wrote first his great commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*. He then wrote his *Brahma-Sūtra Bhāṣya*. After he returned to Udipi he converted his Guru Achyutapreksha to his faith. He founded the temple of Lord Kṛṣṇa at Udipi. He ordained eight ascetics in eight mutts there and enjoined them to carry on the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa of Udipi. Even today orthodox Mādhwas go to Udipi at least once in their lives. Sri Madhwa prohibited animal sacrifices altogether.

Sri Madhwa afterwards wrote *Śrī Mahābhārata Tātparya Nirṇaya* expounding the essence of the *Mahābhārata*. It was written after he made a second pilgrimage to Badari. A noteworthy incident in his life is the long-

drawn battle between him and the Srinigeri Guru. It is said that Sri Madhwa's enemies stole and took away his library to spite him and that he recovered it with the help of King Jayasīṁha who was the ruler of Kumbha. The other works written by him were *Anu Bhāṣya*, *Anu Vyākhyāna*, commentaries on the ten Upaniṣads, *Bhāgavata Tātparya Nirṇaya* and the ten Prakaraṇas, viz., *Tattva Nirṇaya*, *Sadāchāra Smṛti*, etc.

Madhyageha and his wife died in the ripeness of years. Their younger son afterwards sought Sannyāsa at the hands of his great elder brother and was accepted into the order and named Viṣṇu Tīrtha. Sri Madhwacharya had already vanquished the famous Pandit Trivikrama in an argument extending over eight days. The converted follower wrote the famous *Tattva Pradīpa* which is the first known commentary on Sri Madhwacharya's *Bhāṣya*. His son Pandit Narayananacharya wrote the well-known *Mādhwa Vijaya*. The Achārya's work on earth was now over. It is stated that in his eightieth year he disappeared from the world and went away to be with Sri Vyāsa in Badarikāśrama in the Himalayas.

The religion of Sri Madhwa was a carrying forward of one of the great traditions of India's past—the Bhāgavata tradition. The Vedānta and the Bhāgavata stressed two separate but inter-related and inter-connected and inter-dependent aspects of the Sādhana of God-realization. The world's mind will always be divided between the joy of dependence on God and the joy of identity with God, and no amount of philosophical discussion will lead to the

rejection of the one divine bliss or the other.

Sri Madhwacharya's philosophy is a simple and clear system. A familiar Sanskrit verse refers to its main tenet of five primary and eternal aspects of separateness and distinction and differentiation, *i.e.*, the separateness of Jāda (inanimate) and Jāda, of Jāda and Jīva (soul), of Jīva and Jīva, of Jāda and Iśwara (God) and of Jīva and Iśwara. His philosophy regards the seen universe as real and eternal. According to him Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa is the First Cause, and Brahmā and Vāyu are the sons of Viṣṇu and his Devī Lakṣmī. He declares that the only way to salvation is through the grace of Vāyu. He has not got for God Śiva the fierce hatred which some bigoted Vaiṣṇavas have for Him, but assigns to Him a lower place than that assigned to God Viṣṇu in his pantheon. According to Madhwaism the worship of Viṣṇu consists in Ankana or marking the body with His symbols, *i.e.*, the five weapons, Nāmakarāṇa or giving His names to children, and Bhajana or singing His glory. Sri Madhwa effected a great reformation by interdicting animal sacrifices not by the Buddhistic process of abolition but by the process of substituting animal forms made of rice-flour for the animals themselves. He lifted the Purāṇas to a

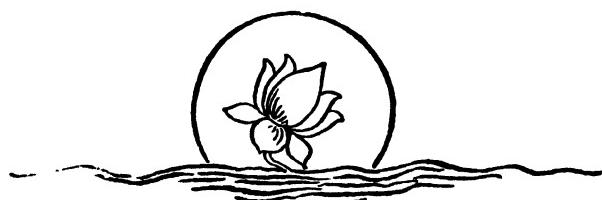
high pedestal and elaborated a new system of fasts and feasts on holy days throughout the year.

The two chief defects in his doctrine are his fierce hate of the Advaita system and his classification of souls. His views in respect of Sri Sankara crystallizes in the fiercely sectarian work known as *Mani Mañjarī* wherein Sri Sankara is represented as the incarnation of the demon Maniman. The other weak point is his classification of souls into those who are eternally free, those who are eternally bound, and those who are eternally damned. Such a doctrine is against reason and revelation and conflicts with the doctrine of the Perfection and Infiniteness of Divine Grace.

A well-known Sanskrit stanza sums up Sri Madhwa's doctrine clearly and compendiously in the following manner:

"In Sri Madhwa's theology Viṣṇu is supreme, the world is real, separateness is true, the individuals are infinitely graded as higher and lower and are dependent on God, liberation is self-realization by the enjoyment of the bliss native to the soul, pure devotion is the means to self-realization, perception and inference and scriptures are the sources of knowledge, and Viṣṇu is known and revealed by all the Vedas.

(Concluded)



God, the Sheet-anchor of Life

BY SWAMI ASESHANANDA

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" says the Bible. The *Gitā* reiterates the same statement when it says: "The world is full of misery. Everything is fleeting. Do thou renounce all cares, O Arjuna, and take refuge in Me. I will redeem you from all sins. Do not grieve."

It is foolishness to hold God responsible for all our sufferings. He has endowed us with freedom of will and action. The whole responsibility for mending or marring our destiny lies with us. It is we that choose a path according to our sweet pleasure and then reap the consequences of it. In order to enjoy momentary pleasures, we forget noble ideals of life and run mad after the golden deer of physical enjoyment and lustfulness. We do not pause to think whether it is right or wrong. As a result we get ourselves burnt. If we put our hand into fire, how can we expect to remain unscathed without a single blister on the body. Is it the fault of the fire? Fire is always neutral. It remains unattached whether we cook food with it or get scorched by it through our foolishness. Two ways are open to us—the way leading to the 'good' and that leading to the 'pleasant'. One who seeks the latter must necessarily undergo the reaction of pain and grief like camels eating the thorny bush through folly.

Misery is not an unmixed evil. It has its redeeming features, too. It is during moments of crises and vicissitudes when the dark and dismal clouds threaten a deluge, that we come to realize the transitoriness of human values, our inner eyes are opened and we catch a glimpse of the Reality behind the fleeting shows. Then only we understand the efficacy of prayer, the merit of spiritual disciplines and the worth of entering into silence for introspection and divine contemplation. The picture has been beautifully drawn by a master-artist with fascinating colour and shade, which we are tempted to quote:—"Yes, then it is—when the load would be sufficient to sink a lot of frail vessels—that the man of strength, the hero, sees the hand of God, the Infinite

Being, who is called and worshipped under different names in different climes. Then it is that the shackles that bind the soul down to this hell of misery break as it were for a time, and unfettered it rises and rises until it reaches the throne of the Lord, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

We must dive deep instead of floating on the surface. Waves roll and storms surge only on the surface. But if we can penetrate below and go deep down where perennial flow of calmness reigns supreme, we will remain unaffected, unperturbed by the mighty billows which invade the sea high above. Communion with God is surely the only panacea for all the ills and miseries of life. If we know how to tune our mind with divine symphony, we will hear entralling music. All sorrows and tribulations will vanish. All our sores will be patched up and wounds healed by the great physician who is ever ready to attend to us. We are like voyagers in the midst of an unchartered ocean. If we do not lose sight of the pole-star, our boat will certainly reach the other shore, the haven of peace and light, with no darkness to assail its realm.

If a man has sincere yearning for God, he will surely get at Him. If he makes any mistakes, or if he is obsessed with any difficulty, God sends His messengers to help him in tiding over the difficulty and to show him the way. The breeze of His grace is ever blowing. We are to unfurl our sails and hoist the flag on the mast. He is all-loving and all-merciful. He is more compassionate, more sympathetic than our earthly father and mother. If we cultivate the habit of remembering Him daily, we will never lose our mooring. We will not get clogged in the quagmire of *Samsāra*. Sri Kṛṣṇa impresses upon Arjuna the necessity of prayer and meditation and the rich treasure that is sure to be gained if the mind is purified of its dross by absolute self-surrender to Him. Oh the beauty of God-mindfulness! In comparison with the joy derived from it, physical pleasures are nothing. They are like dusts of the

ground. Śrī Bhagavān says:—"Let that be known as Yoga, which is severance of contact with pain. That on gaining which a man feels there is no greater gain and that in which established he is not moved even by the heaviest of afflictions."

All through the ages there have been men who have vouched for the reality of God. To them God was their food and drink. Worldly pleasures appeared extremely bitter and insipid to them. One such shining example we meet with in the life of Manikkavachaka, one of the four important Saiva saints of South India. His famous work *Tiruvachakam* has been the source of thrilling inspiration to many seekers after God. The songs with their irresistible appeal and uplifting message have soothed many an agonized heart and cheered up many a heavy-laden soul. He was the Prime Minister in the court of the Pandyan King at Madura. He lived a pompous life with several retinues and officers who were willing to obey his command and ready to fulfil every wish of his even at the cost of their lives. He was literally the uncrowned king of the whole kingdom. But in spite of his rank and position, his heart pined for something else. Worldly transactions and earthly joys ceased to give him delight. He was seeking for a Guru who would show him the way. The burning passion of his life was to have the vision of Śiva, the most compassionate Deity, who drank poison for the sake of the afflicted humanity. The story says that he accidentally met his Guru when he went under the commission of the king to buy some horses for his regiment to a place called Tirupperundurur. He was so much overwhelmed with joy that he spent all the money he had in building a temple to his teacher instead of discharging the errand for which he had come. This reached the ears of the monarch, who dismissed him immediately from his exalted status and administered severe punishment for the dereliction of duty. Affliction drew him

nearer to God. This was the turning point in his life and he welcomed it with perfect resignation. He began to spend most of his time in prayer and meditation. Barefooted he wandered from temple to temple in quest of the drink divine. He was dead to the world and alive in God-consciousness. He composed spontaneously from the depth of his love charming verses in praise of his beloved Iṣṭa Devatā. This rare gift brought for him the appropriate name by which he was designated. This epithet adorned his character and fitted him so well that truly he was a saint whose outpourings were like gems to shine in this dark wilderness of the world. Lord Natarāja at last blessed him, gave him his Darśana and took him into his arms. Thus the mission of his life was fulfilled. As a poet Manikkavachaka holds an exalted place in the realm of Tamil poetry. The melody of his verses is sweet, ennobling and entrancing. It is not an exaggeration when it is said that he whose heart does not melt at the listening of Manikkavachaka's lyrics is really a man possessed of a heart of stone. His is a dried up heart which will melt at nothing. According to a famous foreign scholar who made a deep and thorough study of Tamil literature with passionate love and interest "he was a strange mixture of St. Paul and St. Francis of Assisi." His hymns are a trumpet-call to the awakening soul to devote its energies to the attainment of God by whole-hearted consecration.

"This day in Thy mercy unto me
 Thou didst drive
 Away the darkness, and stand as
 Rising Sun.
 Of this Thy way of rising there
 being naught
 Else but Thou—I thought within
 and thought,—
 I drew nearer and nearer to Thee,
 wearing away,
 Atom by atom, till I was one with
 Thee,
 O Śiva, dweller in the great Holy
 Shrine!"



War Prosperity and the Average Indian

BY SETH RAM KRISHNA DALMIA

When I survey the lives and fortunes of countless people in all parts of world, including India, I am overwhelmed with the weight of the fact that millions of human beings are losing their lives in this war of ideologies, and many more millions parents, wives, children and friends of these combatants, are bemoaning their dear dead. Civilians are being indiscriminately bombed from the air and are paying the supreme penalty. Nearer home, large numbers of innocent people have met with the same fate in Burma, Malaya and elsewhere, and as the war progresses, the toll of human life and suffering is bound to mount up. But I must say that India is comparatively lucky.

In former wars, casualties were counted on the battle-field, but in the present war casualties have to be measured not merely in the lists of actual physical combat as of yore, but also in the incalculable amount of suffering caused to millions of innocent people both in the combat areas and outside. The economic implications of war are far flung and are of graver consequence to the world at large and to its present and future dwellers, than the actual physical results of warfare. Whether one likes it or not, we are forced to accept this as a people's war, which affects everyone in this world, including people in Germany, the U. S. S. R. and many other countries.

The present war has not been caused by any single individual or by groups of them, and Hitler, Roosevelt, Stalin, Mussolini and Churchill are mere instruments, and God fulfils Himself through them. His ways are inscrutable and in his Dominion there cannot be any injustice. We are going through a process of life and living, the laws of which are fundamentally good for all. Some people think that Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah are responsible for discontent in this country, but as in the case of Churchill etc., they too are not free agents but mere instruments of God. From the worldly point of view, responsibility for creating discontent may be fastened on those of us who have not learnt to think and blindly follow any tenet propounded by any leader. This blind adherence to tenet and leaders have been the bane of India. There is no compromise in the realm of Nature, and her inexorable laws always deal out justice. The parent while chastising the child aims at the benefit of the child.

I feel that the causes of the present war are imbedded in the accumulated mass of power, intellect and greed, particularly for luxuries, which modern civilization has almost deified. There cannot be any doubt that man's acquisitive instincts will continue to play their role as far as the human world is concerned, but equitable distribution of wealth must be the criter-

ion for the future, as also for the present. Otherwise, poverty amidst plenty will continue to scourge the world, and the instrument of war as the arbitrating power to keep peace between man and man and country and country, will once again, and perhaps with a more disastrous effect, be invoked in the future. There have been many an Avatāra and saint who has sought to reform this world, and he did bring about temporary reform but like the story of the dog's tail we are still where we were before. Justice must run its course. We have lost our integrity and are degraded. The judgment of Providence has manifested itself in this war which has come forth to chastise us and lift us from our depravity.

WAR AND INDIA

The history and impact of the past three gory years show that we in India are considerably benefited in the economic sphere. Our overseas trade, which used to yield a large national income before the war, has been drastically curtailed, owing to the loss of overseas markets. Our import trade also has dwindled. As a counterpoise to this, we have accelerated production of goods and services, the result of which must be taken to mean a considerable addition to our income internally. I shall not express any opinion about the veracity of statistics, but what is obtained from authorities in the shape of information is the only means for me with which to judge economic phenomena in the country.

From this point of view, it will be seen that our production has outstripped all previous records. The textiles industry is now working almost all the twenty-four hours of day and night. The iron and steel industry, the leather and woollen industries, in fact every type of industry, either primarily engaged in production of war goods or occupied with the task of feeding and clothing the 400,000,000 people in the land, are all working to full capacity, first to meet war-time demands of defence services and of the civilian population, and then to fill the gaps created by the interruption of imports into the country from outside owing to war conditions. Employment, particularly in the industrial sphere, has nearly doubled itself compared to conditions prevailing before the present war, and agricultural employment also does not lag behind.

In addition to this, there is a vast increase in the prices level generally of all articles and commodities, and this is only a very faint reflection of the economic forces prevailing all over the world as a result of war. The Supply Department of the Government of India, has till the end of October 1942, purchased goods valued at over Rs. 400 crores, and the volume and value of these orders are daily increasing. Today there is recruitment for defence forces at the rate of some 50,000 men per month, and our normal peacetime army of some 150,000 men has now overstepped the million mark. That is to say, in terms of wages and services, earnings of these com-

batants and those of the vaster number of former civilians now engaged in ancillary war and civil work, as a direct result of international hostilities, must be considerable. The inflow of money into villages and generally into every part of the country is very large though I would not, in the absence of any reliable statistics, venture to make a guess as to its extent. That is to say, the ordinary masses in the country today have a greater purchasing power, in terms of money incomes, than ever before. This point is illustrated by the statistics of the Reserve Bank of India, which show that compared to the note circulation after the outbreak of war, which was some Rs. 169 crores, we have today some Rs. 514 crores of notes, in addition to the expansion of the metallic currency, which is also not inconsiderable. This means that for every rupee of currency, both metallic and paper, which we had in August 1939, we have today more than three times in use. Surely, greater proportion of this must represent the additional income in terms of paper of the man-in-the-street. Of this I have not the least doubt.

Much of India's stocks of gold and silver has already been drained away and the country is the poorer for it, but still the present craze of the illiterate masses to hoard gold and silver will redound to their disadvantage as prices are bound to fall after the war.

LIVING COSTS

But this is not the whole picture of the war's impact on the economy

of India and on the life and living of the community. An examination of the index figures of commodities all over the country shows how prices have risen. The Finance Member, in his last Budget statement, revealed that the working class cost of living indices for Bombay, Madras, Cawnpore and Lahore have by that time, compared to the position in the month preceding the outbreak of war, risen by some 24, 23, 51 and 41 points respectively for each city, and I am also sure that when he publishes figures concerning these increases in his coming Budget statement, further vital increases would have been registered. All this means one thing, viz., that the increased money income of the generality of people in this country since the war broke out three years ago, has been eaten up to a greater or lesser extent by the spiral of prices. I shall not attempt, because it is not scientifically possible at the moment on the basis of the data available, to indicate the percentage of mulcting which rising prices have done to rising money incomes. But I have no doubt in my mind that the price factor has generally offset the benefits of war to ordinary people, such as clerks and labourers, who are in distress because they got no proper increments to make up for the price factor.

As a corollary to this, I must state that war has considerably benefited the industrialist and even the small businessman and trader. This does not indicate that increasing profits are not being eaten up by increased

taxation. But this much I shall permit myself to say, the man-in-the-street in the country has not been benefited to the extent to which industrialists and businessmen have been. This, however, is a statement of comparative values.

AFTER THE WAR

This question arises because of one significant point. The average Indian today is not particularly well off owing to the considerations set forth above. When peace arrives, there may be a slump all round after sometime, unless the victor powers do something appropriate for the defeated nations and prevent the recurrence of what happened after the last war. Prices of commodities and services may tumble down. Industrialists may be faced with the same deflationary tendencies and attendant depression conditions, as they were a few years after the conclusion of the last Great War. The average man may not discover at his disposal any stored up purchasing power out of his present increased money income, for the increase has more or less evaporated into thin air, owing to the higher costs of living and the assumption of "scarcity values" by commodities and services these days. Then, it only remains that the Government takes it in hand to make up the present war burden losses, though it is conceivable that there may be a reduction in the incidence and range of war taxation after the conclusion of peace.

I ought to be and I am an optimist as Nature would demand,

and I firmly believe that out of grief comes bliss and out of bondage freedom. There is much grumbling in the world today, including India, concerning the standard of living, but very few people know what decent living is, or could be. Decent living must be clean and simple living, and spending without saving will not do good to any one. Everyone in this country should realize that out of the ashes of this total war, there may emerge a most ruthless competition—individualistic in tendency, corrosive in effect and disregardful of bonds of any kind. This has to be forestalled in our country even today. We have fallen from humanity and even have become callous concerning the length and intensity of warfare now going on, for greed has blinded us and we are selfishly engrossed in our own mundane affairs. We in this country can only save ourselves if we rediscover the art of simple and clean living we have long since forgotten, so that we might be enabled to compete with the industries and trades of other countries. It is better to have a rupee wage scale and greater efficiency, than a cheaper wage and no efficiency. Again, it is better for one to save one pice out of a four anna wage, than no savings out of a Rs. 2/-wage, which is perhaps eaten up by high prices of the bare necessities of life. I consider cheapness, contentment, simple living and efficiency as the characteristics which will bring us to a position comparable with the rest of the world.

I do not blame England or any outside agency for the ills of my country, for I consider that it is the hand of God,

who in my view is a just God, shaping with a purpose the destiny of my countrymen as also the destiny of all created beings. But I must say that the British are comparatively better than many other nationals now engaged in a life and death struggle. It is in some measure true that the British have defects and weaknesses, but still I think that they are better than us in many respects. Had we been placed in the same position in which they are today, it is possible that we, judging from our present mentality, would have done worse.

Patriotism is a great virtue, but mere patriotism cannot remove all ills. I have not much regard for people who pose to be nationalists and yet benefit themselves out of the business that comes across their way from the Government during these war days. On the contrary, I have respect for those who do not feel apologetic about their political creed in this business world. For, there cannot be any duality about one's activities, and one can never have both the worlds, so to speak. My creed ought to be one of sympathy for all, and I cannot have any word of commendation for those, including myself, who try to have the doubtful advantage of patriotism and inconsistency. On the contrary, more sacrifice and justice are needed in this country today than ever before. And God in his righteousness will deal an equal measure of justice and comfort for all in due time.

My strong conviction, again, is that India is in bondage not because of England but because we want her to be so. Since no country, however powerful, can keep another in bondage by the might of her arms, or by any other means such as creation of disunity among various communities inhabiting her.

The saying runs 'a slave is a slave because he is a slave'. If any country is kept in bondage by force of arms, it can only be so temporarily. Can anyone say there is injustice in the Kingdom of the Everpresent ? The truth of "first deserve and then desire" is applicable to all humanity, but God says "deserve only, you need not desire". The world is like human body, and this war is a surgical operation which is purifying us, lifting us up. Reformers should reform themselves instead of reforming others, leaders who cry for the freedom of the masses must first free themselves.

And what is freedom ? I interpret freedom as a state of existence in which the mind is free and exercises full control over desires—desire for power, for wealth, for enjoyment and for grabbing the good things of the earth. The American, it is said, is a free man. But is he really free ? Is he not a slave to his avarice, his luxuries and his desire to rule the markets of the world ?

We in India have always striven for freedom of the spirit and not merely of the body. A deadlier war is waging within ourselves and our minds are being continually wracked with the eternal conflict between forces of good and evil. We have to win in this internal strife, we have to exterminate the evil in us, so that darkness and untruth may die out, leaving light and truth to shine in their full fulgence.

Let us fight to regain our lost soul, so that we may be worthy of Mother India, which was once the most spiritually advanced country in the world.

An Appeal to our Readers

हरे राम हरे राम राम हरे हरे । हरे कृष्ण हरे कृष्ण कृष्ण हरे हरे ॥

Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare,
Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare.

The glory of the Divine Name is infinite. In this age of Kali, man has no other support except the Name of God. The scriptures proclaim that even a single Name of God bears the potency of delivering one from worldly bondage. The Name has been described as a veritable wish-yielding tree. It is divine in essence, All-pure, All-perfect, and eternal, the embodiment of Knowledge and Bliss. For the Name of God and God Himself are perfectly identical.

Every year an appeal is issued to the readers of the *Kalyan* and the *Kalyana-Kalpataru* to take up the Japa of the Divine Name for two months or more from the month of Paus to the full-moon day of Phālguna. Over and above the above, a special appeal was made in June this year, for the good of humanity in the present World-crisis, to perform the Japa till Prabodhini Ekādaśī, which fell on 18th November, 1942. Our readers gave an enthusiastic response to this appeal. That period being over, we appeal to them now to take up the usual annual Japa of the above sacred Mantra 10 crores of times from Paus (December 23, 1942) to the full-moon of Phālguna, which falls on March 21, 1943. We sincerely hope that readers of the *Kalpataru* will enthusiastically participate in this supreme Yajña of the Kali age—the Japa of the Divine Name and induce others to participate in the same, and thereby bring spiritual gain to themselves and to the world at large.

1. From whatever date the reader may start the Japa, it should be completed on the full-moon day of Phālguna (corresponding to March 21, 1943).
2. Men and women of all nationalities, all classes and all ages, from the child to the old man, can undertake the Japa of this sacred Mantra.
3. An individual desiring to participate in the Yajña should repeat the Mantra at least 108 times (*i.e.*, till one complete round of the beads of rosary has been counted).
4. Readers who organize the Japa should send us information about the number of daily Japa that they are able to organize. The names of performers need not be mentioned. Only the correspondent who sends the information should send his name and address.
5. The full Mantra consisting of 16 Names and not one Name only should be regarded as unit for purposes of calculation. For instance, if the practicant undertakes to do one Mālā of Japa daily, he will be required to repeat the whole Mantra 108 times, and deducting 8 as allowance for errors the total amount of Mantra-Japa he will be reckoned to have performed in the course of one day will be 100. The total amount of Japa for the whole period should be computed in this way from the date of commencement of Japa to the end of Phālguna.
6. All intimations are to be addressed to:—

NĀMA-JAPA DEPARTMENT,
KALYAN OFFICE
Gorakhpur, U.P.

